Hafa Adai!

Distressed vessel rescued outside Coral Ocean Point reef. PAGE 3
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IPI agrees to pay $3.4M, have monitor to resolve Labor case

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has agreed to pay the U.S. Department of Labor a total of $3.36 million as part of a consent judgment intended to resolve a labor lawsuit the department filed against the company.

The $3.36 million is composed of $1,580,00 in back wages, another $1,580,000 in liquidated damages, and $200,000 in civil monetary penalties.

IPI has already paid the Labor Department $300,000; the rest will be paid off as part of the consent decree.

The U.S. Department of Labor sued Imperial Pacific International

See IPI on Page 4

CUC water wells feeling the pinch

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Reflecting a prior notice from the National Weather Service about drought hitting the CNMI, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has affirmed that CUC is experiencing a drop among its water supply sources on Saipan.

CUC executive director Gary P.

See CUC on Page 4

Armed poker robber nabbed

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety arrested last Saturday a 51-year-old woman who was allegedly caught on

See ARMED on Page 4

This undated mug shot released by the Department of Public Safety shows Artemia Gabayeron, who is suspected of robbing a poker arcade at knifepoint last week. Gabayeron was arrested last Saturday by police in pursuant of an arrest warrant. DPS

Foreign performers electrify crowd at arts festival

RELATED NEWS
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Kenichi Ebina, the winner of *America's Got Talent* in 2013, electrified a jam-packed crowd at the #MyMarianas Paradise Festival concert that took place at the 38th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival at the Civic Center in Susupe Saturday night.

Ebina, who is from Japan and served as the festival's finale performer, was joined on stage by other performers: South Korean boy band Ulala Session, composed of members Seung-il Kim, Myung-hoon

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Kenichi Ebina, the winner of *America's Got Talent* in 2013, electrifies the crowd at the #MyMarianas Paradise Festival concert at the Civic Center in Susupe Saturday night. REICA RAMIREZ

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A growing number of states are moving to allow big lottery winners jackpots to stay anonymous.

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An idea is being floated by President Trump to send border immigrants to "sanctuary cities."

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Devoted "Game of Thrones" fans will at long last get the ending they've craved.

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TAGA SPORTS APRIL - JUNE 2019 EDITION

Local

All CNMI employers urged to participate in PWS

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CNMI employers are being encouraged to submit the information needed in the ongoing prevailing wage survey on or before April 22. The next part entails calculating the wages in each job category in the CNMI.

The survey is a requirement when petitioning foreign workers or renewing petitions for foreign workers in the CNMI.

The CNMI must establish its own prevailing wage or else Guam's data would be used in renewing petitions of guest workers in the CNMI-Only Transitional Worker or CW-1 visa program.

Right now, the CNMI's prevailing wage survey has been contracted out to Hive Analytic, which is involved in data analytics and economic research, that is helping the CNMI Department of Commerce, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, and the Northern Marianas Business Alliance Corp. in collecting the data needed to complete the survey, or PWS.

The NMBAC has appealed to employers to hold off in submitting their CW-1 petitions for the coming fiscal year 2020 until they completed the data needed for the PWS. The NMBAC said that there are enough CW-1 visas for fiscal year 2020, which starts Oct. 1, since U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services indicated that only 9,000 slots out of the 13,000 available in fiscal year 2019 had been utilized.

Survey instructions and other important information on the PWS can be accessed online at cnmiprevailingwage.com. The frequently asked questions are also being continuously updated to serve as guide to employers in accomplishing the PWS.

Matt Deleon Guerrero, representing Hive Analytics, said during last Wednesday's meeting of the Society for Human Resources Management-CNMI Chapter at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan's Charley's Cabaret, said all CNMI employers need to get involved in the PWS.

"The information will be sorted. We're not getting the information directly. It is all going to a computer that can be accessed at the [local Commerce Department's] Central Statistics Division. Make sure all information of your employees are complete since it would be very helpful for us, said Deleon Guerrero.

"Again, the deadline is April 22. If you don't submit the accomplished survey [on or before April 22], the information won't make it and it will be difficult for us to reach the benchmark set by the U.S. Department of Labor. The [fewer number] of survey respondents will affect the ability for us to publish your application for prevailing wage."

And without a CNMI prevailing wage, Guam's data will be used. If the April 22 deadline is not met or there are no respondents on a particular occupation code, Hive Analytics would issue another survey for a one-week period. They are looking to finish the PWS next month.

Deleon Guerrero said they are looking at a two-week period, the recent pay period, in determining the job descriptions of each employee—especially those who have two jobs. "Whatever job that person did in the time frame, then that's the information to be used and listed in the survey. The position title is just to help us validate in matching the occupation."

Hive Analytics is trying to prioritize jobs in the tourism industry, hotel and restaurant, since this is where the higher employee population is. "We're doing everything we can so we can publish it as quickly as possible. The effort is to prioritize the calculation on the highest employee population, the hotel and restaurant industry."

Readiness exercise at US Naval Hospital Guam

AGANA HEIGHTS, Guam—The U.S. Naval Hospital Guam will conduct a readiness exercise on April 29, from noon to 4pm, to ensure contingency requirements are up to date.

USNH Guam emergency department will remain open during the date and time indicated. The public should not be alarmed if they see or hear activities associated with the exercise. ***(PR)***

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Distressed vessel rescued outside Coral Ocean Point reef

Last Friday, April 12, 2019, at about 12:23pm, the central desk of the Department of Public Service received a 911 call of a distressed vessel just outside the reef of Coral Ocean Point.

Dispatch then notified the CNMI DPS Boating Safety Unit, which immediately launched the Impact rescue boat from the Smiling Cove Marina.

Officers aboard the *Impact* rescue boat arrived at the area at about 1:01pm and noticed a beige-colored, 14-foot Mckee boat with two males onboard. A tow line was then placed on the boat and the *Impact* rescue boat pulled the distressed vessel toward the Smiling Cove Marina, arriving at the marina at about 1:58pm.

After securing the boat, officers learned that the two occupants left the Smiling Cove Marina earlier that morning at about 8:30am and headed south toward the COP area to go fishing, arriving at their location shortly around 10am. At 12pm both individuals decided to change their fishing spot and, after a few unsuccessful attempts at starting up their boats engine, they noticed that their fishing vessel began drifting further away from Saipan.

One of the fishermen immediately called his family and informed them of what has happened and asked his wife to call 911 as they continued to try and start the engine.

DPS boating safety unit would like to remind all boaters to be aware of water conditions and tide changes while planning your next trip and would also encourage all boaters to let a family member know about your anticipated fishing route before going into the water. Practice safe boating and always be sure to have enough life jackets for all on board. ***(PR)***

KES' Beyer is 2019 PSS Librarian of the Year

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

ERWIN ENCINARES

Natalie Hill Beyer, left, shakes the hand of Education Commissioner Glenn Muña as she is announced as the Public School System 2019 Librarian of the Year.

Kagman Elementary School librarian Natalie Hill Beyer was named over the weekend as the 2019 Librarian of the Year of the Public School System.

The announcement was made at the Kanoa Resort last Friday morning, completing PSS' roster of annual awards.

Beyer bested four other nominees—librarians from William S. Reyes Middle School, Kagman High School, Marianas High School, and the Tinian Jr. Sr. High School.

Beyer's work at the KES library includes several projects such as the introduction of building materials for those interested in science, technology, engineering, and math.

"This is an honor. I wouldn't be here without my amazing cohort," Beyer said in her acceptance speech. "It is such a relief to know that I have mentors in school. I gather my ideas from you and I am inspired by you, guys."

"Any achievement that I have in my school library is because I am working with great minds and I am able to be inspired by all of you," she added.

Beyer won the same award last year.

"It's a surprise that I won because there were a lot of very special things that my colleagues have been doing, so I think there are some other teachers that are very deserving of this," she said in a later interview.

Beyer started her career with PSS at Hopwood Middle School as a social studies teacher and as a vice principal for curriculum and instruction before moving to Kagman. She was with Hopwood for almost nine years and with KES for almost four years.

Beyer developed this year a "maker space" in the library, where students go to create, build, and design.

"One of the areas we have in the 'maker space' is the Lego zone," she said.

With that, students were able to come in and do STEM challenges, as well as participate in Lego clubs and project-based learning.

"It challenges them to be creative, think critically, and to work collaboratively with their classmates," she said.

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ARMED

From Page 1

surveillance camera robbing a poker gaming arcade at knifepoint last week.

Artemia Gabayeron, 51, was arrested last Saturday pursuant to an arrest warrant issued by Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho.

Gabayeron is charged with robbery with a dangerous weapon.

According to a DPS statement, Camacho issued the arrest warrant for Gabayeron last Saturday at about 7:16am, for the charge of robbery with a dangerous weapon.

At about 8:42pm that same day, Gabayeron was apprehended by local police at her home in Chalan Kiya.

Gabeyeron has since been booked at the Department of Corrections.

DPS credited numerous leads for leading to the identification and arrest of the suspect.

Gabayeron was allegedly caught on surveillance footage robbing the Royal Poker gaming arcade in Olei last Thursday. Gabayeron was reportedly seen entering the arcade and leaving after robbing the cashier of about $650.

The suspect allegedly walked into the establishment between 6:30am and 6:45am after security has left and made sure that there were no other people inside the establishment before proceeding with the robbery.

The suspect called the cashier for assistance first before forcing her way into the cashier's area and holding the cashier at knifepoint.

A short struggle occurred before the suspect was able to open the cash register and grab a handful of cash valued at about $650.

The suspect then fled the establishment, going south toward Oleai.

IPI

From Page 1

Holdings Ltd. and its subsidiary, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, for alleged violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act over the construction of Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel and Casino in Garapan.

Labor Secretary R. Alexander Acosta filed the lawsuit in federal court following an investigation on the casino construction project covering the periods from Jan. 22, 2016, to Dec. 19, 2017.

The investigation revealed violations of the FLSA caused by IPI contractors' failure to pay overtime and minimum wages, as well as maintain records required by the FLSA.

According to the draft consent judgment, IPI already paid Labor $300,000. IPI shall pay to Labor the remaining $3.06 million (which includes interest) in three payments $1.02 million on the first of December in 2019, 2020, and 2021.

U.S. Department of Justice senior trial attorneys Cherlyl L. Adams and Boris Orlov are counsels for Acosta in the lawsuit, which was filed before the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Thursday afternoon. Orlov signed the consent judgment last April 9.

IPI Holdings Ltd. chairwoman Cui Li Jie, who is also the representative of IPI (CNMI) LLC, signed the consent draft judgment last April 5. Eugene R. Sullivan is counsel for IPI.

According to the lawsuit, Acosta determined that IPI had economic control over the casino construction project and its contractors' workers on the project, making it an employer of those workers for purposes of the FLSA.

As a result of IPI's contractors paying employees an hourly rate below the required federal minimum wage, defendants have violated the provisions of the FLSA.

Acosta asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to find IPI liable for an unpaid minimum wage and overtime compensation during the period that may be found by the court to be due under the FLSA.

He also requested the court to hold IPI liable to pay the former workers an additional amount for liquidated damages.

Under the draft consent judgment, IPI understands and acknowledge that demanding or accepting any of the funds due employees under this judgment or threatening any employee or retaliating against any employee for accepting money due under this judgment or exercising any of their rights under the FLSA is specifically prohibited by the FLSA.

IPI acknowledges that violation of this judgment may subject the company to equitable and legal damages, including punitive damages and civil contempt.

Identity of all employees is not presently known and that the list will be amended by Acosta at his discretion upon identifying the employees.

The Labor secretary shall allocate and distribute the amount due that is paid, minus deductions from employees' share of payroll and withholding taxes.

Any money not paid within three years from the receipt of the final payment—because of an inability to locate the persons or because of their refusal to accept it—shall go to U.S. Treasury.

All employees shall be paid an hourly rate and in compliance with minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. All production or other bonuses will be included in the calculation of the regular rate for purposes of computing overtime.

Within 120 days of entry of this judgment, IPI shall require all construction contractors with whom it does business to deposit with IPI or in escrow the amount of $100,000 or one month payroll, whichever is more.

This amount must be available to pay back wages to employees in the event violations are discovered by IPI, the independent monitor, or Labor.

The contractor must maintain this deposit throughout the duration of its work for IPI.

After 30 days of this judgment, IPI shall not enter into any new contract with, extend any contract of or provide any work to any contractor who has not obtained the required deposit.

IPI shall also hire an independent third-party to train contractor supervisors about the FLSA.

All current and future construction contractors shall also attend an education outreach seminar by the Wage Hour Division of Labor (and any other Wage Hour invited agency such as OSHA, CNMI Casino Commission, and CNMI Labor).

The contractor representative must be managers with responsibility for business operations and supervisors who are responsible for payroll and employee work conditions.

IPI will be made to work with an independent monitor selected by USDOL and appointed by the court to monitor IPI and contractor compliance with the FLSA and the terms of the consent judgment.

The independent monitor is permitted to enter the worksite without prior notice, inspect all of the facilities and working conditions of the worksite; and inspect all books, records, and documents.

IPI will pay for the independent monitor.

On or before April 15, 2019, IPI shall deposit $45,000 in the court's registry for payment to the independent monitor.

On or before Nov. 1, 2019, IPI shall deposit a second payment of $45,000 for payment to the independent monitor, for a total payment of $90,000.

The independent monitor shall submit quarterly billing statements to the court and the parties starting on July 15, 2019.

The total billings by the independent monitor shall not exceed $90,000.

The accounting firm Burger, Comer, and Magliari has been appointed as the independent monitor to monitor IPI's compliance with the FLSA and the terms of the consent judgment.

On or before May 30, 2019, the independent monitor shall do separate educational question-and-answer sessions with each of the contractors performing construction work at the IPI casino site with supervisors concerning the requirements of the consent judgment and the FLSA.

One hundred-twenty days after entry of the consent judgment, the independent monitor shall interview employees, onsite, offsite, and/or by telephone concerning the contractors' compliance with the terms of the consent judgment and the FLSA, including anti-retaliation provisions.

If the independent monitor believes any legal violation has occurred, it will notify IPI at once.

IPI shall then correct the wage violation by the next payroll unless IPI dispute the violations, in which case the alleged violations shall be reported to Acosta and any other regulatory agency within five days.

The duties of the independent monitor will end one year after, unless the court orders additional monitoring.

CUC

From Page 1

Camacho disclosed Wednesday that CUC's T1 well on Capital Hill is barely supplying any flow.

He said the Donni Spring, which usually supplies water at 350 gallons per minute, is down to 50 gallons per minute.

"This is expected to continue for three months," he said.

Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency had just issued a notice of a worsening condition for drought over the next few months.

Camacho underscored the importance for CUC customers to take into account several suggestions and warnings that may offer some protection from the drought and avoid problems.

He also stressed the need for customers to conserve water.

Camacho hopes people are able to enjoy the dry season just as they do any other day of the year.

However, he said, prevention and being smart in how anyone handles dry conditions can help avoid potentially dangerous situations from starting.

Earlier, Camacho stated that the CNMI's water supply is fine "for the time being" but still encouraged people to conserve water.

Some tips to conserve water:

■ Reserve any water for your garden and be sure to compost the soil to help retain moist conditions.

■ Reduce car washes during this period.

■ Anyone or any commercial establishment using grease products for cooking oil should avoid pouring the grease down your sink. This will avoid CUC having to flush with large quantities of water grease buildup in the sanitary mains.

■ Check your property for leaks and dripping faucets.

■ Avoid getting dehydrated when you are outside by drinking adequate amounts of fluids.

■ Avoid flicking matches and lighted cigarettes into the grass or woods that could easily ignite.

■ Avoid starting any fires to burn built up leaves and branch piles until the wet season starts again.

■ Keep spare water around the home just in case there is a loss of water due to a leak affecting your area or if supplies fall.

US govt seeks court OK for $600K to buy 2 fuel tanks

The U.S. government has asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to allow it to buy, ship, and install two horizontal cylindrical tanks to replace the corroded tanks at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s Power Plant 4 in Puerto Rico, on Saipan.

The project has a budget of $600,000.

U.S. Department of Justice Environmental Enforcement Section senior trial attorney Bradley R. O'Brien informed the court last Friday that the work will be done by the court-appointed Engineering and Environmental Management Company, to be funded through the Court Registry Account. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

FOREIGN

From Page 1

Kim, Do-won Choe, and Junseok Ha; South Korean singer Huk Gak; and singer Yixin Wang of China.

Ebina's signature moves wowed the crowd, majority of whom had whipped out their smartphones to record the performance.

Ebina's last number was a tribute to the 10th death anniversary of the late King of Pop, Michael Jackson. He copied Jackson's iconic moonwalk and anti-gravity lean, drawing loud applause from the audience.

Ebina used sound, light and visual effects, making his dance numbers very entertaining.

In an interactive moment, the Japanese performer also taught the audience some key steps of Jackson's monster hit, *Thriller*.

After his performance, Ebina gamely posed for photos and videos with the audience beside the stage.

At a news briefing last Friday morning at the festival ground, Ebina, 44, said what he likes about the MyMarianas Paradise Festival is the fact that he would share the stage, through art, with China and South Korea.

"From a political point of view, they have some problems with each other, but in arts, no barriers," Ebina said.

He said it is a great opportunity for him to share the stage with the two countries to entertain tourists and the people of the CNMI.

Ebina said it's his first time to visit Saipan and although he had no chance yet that Friday morning to tour around, he loves the weather.

"I'm sure I'm going to have fun here. I wish I could bring my family here but my daughter is [in] school. Maybe next time," said the smiling Ebina.

He called his performance "dance-ish," because, according to him, it is not purely about dancing but incorporates elements such as lights and sounds into his performance.

Ebina won *America's Got Talent* six years ago, in 2013, out of 75,000 contestants. "I don't know why. I was lucky. It was a great experience," he said.

Ebina grew up in Japan and he moved to the U.S. mainland when he was 20 years old. He is now based in Japan and that decision was a family matter.

While in high school in Japan, he was not so much into dancing but a friend taught him a dance step called "running man." When he moved to the U.S., he recalled being at a dance party and, "at some point, they made a circle, and everybody was showing off in the center. I was shy but there was a moment you're next. I had to go. I jumped into the circle."

He did the "running man" and was surprised when people liked it.

"I started practicing dance steps by watching videos… and that's how I started," Ebina said.

When asked about his signature "head fall" move, Ebina joked that his head is just big and it sometimes falls.

Ebina said the most memorable part of his stint with *America's Got Talent* was when he made it during the audition. He said the reaction of the audience was overwhelming.

"The energy from the audience that hit me was like a machine gun," he said. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Manglona wins prestigious Truman Scholarship

University of California, Berkeley, media studies major Thomas Manglona II has won a Truman Scholarship—the first University of California, Berkeley, student to win the prestigious award since 2013.

Following a long in-school application process and interview, the University of California, Berkeley nominated Manglona for the scholarship. His selection as a finalist in February led to another interview round earlier this month in Washington, D.C. before a selection panel of Truman Scholarship alumni and trustees.

Out of an application pool of over 840 students from 346 colleges, scholarships were awarded to 62 students, mostly college juniors. According to the Truman Foundation's press release, "this is the largest number of applicants from a record number of schools in recent history. They were chosen by 16 independent selection panels based on the finalists' academic success and leadership accomplishments, as well as their likelihood of becoming public service leaders. "

Manglona II

Manglona, from Rota, is a Gates Millennium scholar, enabling him to pursue undergraduate studies on a full scholarship.

At Berkeley, he maintains a straight-A academic record and serves as president of the campus television station, CalTV, managing over 100 student media makers. He helped establish the first-ever staff position dedicated to serving Pacific Islander student needs and the first Critical Pacific Islands Library Guide on campus.

Manglona co-founded Oceania Connects, an online multimedia platform to rewrite and reclaim Pacific Islander narratives. He organizes efforts with fellow Pacific Islanders as part of Independent Guahan in the Bay Area to raise awareness of island issues and create solutions within higher education. An active member of the Asian American Journalists Association, he works to improve Islander representation on a national level. Manglona also joined the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Privacy at Berkeley, conducting research on data breaches, privacy, and cybersecurity.

Manglona, a 2016 honors graduate of Mount Carmel School, worked for the Pacific News Center, the *Marianas Variety, Saipan Tribune*, and *Taga Sports* magazine as a high school student. More recently, he interned at ABC 7 News in San Francisco.

"This scholarship not only means that graduate school is more of a possibility, but also that I am able to learn and gain skills to be a better journalist for our communities," said Manglona, who plans to pursue graduate studies in journalism. While the scholarship provides financial support, it also offers some priority admission at some top graduate programs.

"I thank my parents, Thomas Manglona and Patricia Songsong, for all their sacrifice and encouragement," he said. "I am deeply grateful for the help of my family, mentors and friends who made this honor possible. Si yu'us ma'ase para todos."

The official announcement can be found at www.truman.gov. ***(PR)***

PALM SUNDAY JON PEREZ

The Catholic faithful gather in front of the altar to have their palm fronds blessed in yesterday's Palm Sunday celebration at Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Catholics around the world commemorate the event of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem every Palm Sunday.

Magnitude 5.3 earthquake hits Hawaii; no risk of tsunami

KAILUA-KONA, Hawaii (AP)—A magnitude 5.3 earthquake hit the west side of the Big Island of Hawaii on Saturday, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

The quake hit about 5pm and had an epicenter about 15 miles (24 kilometers) southwest of Kailua-Kona, a city of nearly 12,000 people on the island's west coast, the agency said. The earthquake had a depth of about 10 miles (16 kilometers).

There is no danger of a tsunami, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center of the National Weather Service said.

Parts of the island may have experienced strong shaking, the center said. The U.S. Geological Survey says it has received 894 responses from people saying they had felt the earthquake.

Hawaii Electric Light tweeted that about 3,300 customers were without power in the community of Waikoloa, Hawaii News Now reported . Crews were working to restore power.

Civil Defense officials told *Hawaii News Now* that the earthquake caused a large boulder to come down on Highway 19-Queen Kaahumanu at the Hapuna Junction.

The news agency also reports that Captain Cook resident Elizabeth Cano said on Facebook that her whole house shook in the quake.

"I'm still cleaning up broken glass," she said.

Administrative Professionals' Day
24 April 2019
from 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM
Administrative Professionals' Day is a worldwideobservance set aside to recognise the hard work and dedication of support team members and the office professionals who make offices work.
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GIOVANNI'S

Application now open for LibDay Royal Court bets

Young ladies in the CNMI are being encouraged to be a part of the 2019 CNMI Liberation Day Royal Court, one of the signature events of the annual Liberation Festivities.

"We are encouraging all our young women who are looking to be actively involved in the community to apply for this unique opportunity," said Royal Court Committee Chair Bridget Maratita. "We have exciting activities lined up for our Liberation Festivities in July. Being a part of the royal court will truly give each young lady an opportunity to be bold and to play an active role within our great community through events and fundraising."

Applications are now available at the Saipan Mayor's Office in San Jose. Email nmiliberation@gmail.com for more information.

Applications are due on Monday, April 22, 2019 and can be turned into the Saipan Mayor's Office or via email.

Community volunteerism will be the guiding principle in organizing the 2019 CNMI Liberation Day Royal Court and other main activities.

Applicants must be young females from the ages of 14 to 22 years old with good academic standing and moral ethical character. Applicants are encouraged to join and boost their portfolio as an active community volunteer.

"Beauty begins, the moment you decide to embrace it within yourself," said 2018 CNMI Liberation Day Queen Brinae Jessilyn Maratita Cruz. "This is an unforgettable experience to gain new friendships, gain confidence in one's self, and engage with the community. Learn to empower the strength you have, enhance the beauty within you, and prosper bigger dreams. As for being the 2018 Liberation Day Queen, it has brought so much tears of joy. I have met so much wonderful people. This is all such a learning experience, yet memorable memories are made out of it!"

Each candidate will have the ability to sell Liberation Day raffle tickets to raise funds and host other various approved fundraisers.

The 2019 CNMI Liberation Day Committee is preparing the official raffle prizes with an announcement to come out soon. The Liberation Day Royal Court titleholders are determined by the amount of money each candidate raises through the sale of raffle tickets.

For more information or contestant application forms, email nmiliberation@gmail.com, visit www.saipanmayor.net or the 2019 CNMI Liberation Day Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CNMILiberationDay. ***(PR)***

Lion's Club adopts eight bus stops

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Public School System students who use eight bus stops on Saipan are in for a treat after the service organization Lion's Club International in the CNMI adopted and repainted them.

The organization, which consists of several smaller clubs in the CNMI, said Thursday that they adopted a total of eight bus stops on Saipan through the Saipan Fil-Am Lion's Club, Saipan Unity Lion's Club, Saipan Marianas Lion's Club, and the Saipan Alliance Lion's Club.

The Saipan Fil-Am Lion's Club adopted one bus stop near the Northern Marianas College going into the Finasisu Terraces and another on As Lito Road.

Saipan Unity Lion's Club adopted one bus shelter in the Tanapag area and another near the Gold Beach Hotel on Beach Road. The latter, according to a statement from the organization, would be turned over to the Saipan Mayor's Office.

Both Lion's clubs started their painting and rehabilitation of the bus shelters back in February 2016, the statement noted.

The Saipan Marianas Lion's Club adopted three bus stops—on Navy Hill, in Gualo Rai, and in Chalan Laulau. The bus shelters are still being repainted and repaired. This group started repairs and repainting in December 2015.

The Saipan Alliance Lion's Club adopted one bus shelter in the east Chalan Monsignor Martinez Road corner Afetna Drive in Koblerville. This group started repairs and repainting on June 2017.

"After the typhoon, some bus shelters needed repairs, repainting, and cleanup of the surroundings. Once you adopt the bus shelters, primarily it's your responsibility now to maintain the beautification of the area and the bus shelter itself," said Lions Club Region 2 chair Annamae Adaza in a statement.

One of the larger challenges for now, she said, include maintenance. Vandalism of the bus shelters are also problematic.

"We are asking the [public] to stop doing it. [The students] are the one benefitting or using the bus shelters and hope they will cooperate so they will have a nice and clean bus shelter," she stated. "[We are] giving back to our beautiful island and…we will continue helping the community in our own little ways."

Members of the Saipan Fil-Am Lion's Club pose for a photo in front of the freshly-painted bus shelter. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Saipan Unity Lion's Club are joined by the Saipan Teen Unity Lion's Club for a photo in front of the adopted bus shelter. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Guam tax refunds mailed

HAGATNA, Guam—The Department of Revenue & Taxation and Department of Administration have mailed 97 tax refund checks totaling $245,714 for error -free returns filed on or before Oct. 31, 2018.

For inquiries, contact Dafne Shimizu, director, Department of Revenue & Taxation at 671-635-1815/1816 or Edward Birn, Department of Administration at (671) 475-1250. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-19-017

ARCHEOLOGICAL MONITORING for LOWER BASE SEWER PHASE 1 – LIFT STATION AND FORCEMAIN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for the Archeological Monitoring of the Construction of Lower Base Sewer Phase 1 – Lift Station and Forcemain in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This work consists of monitoring and inspection of excavation works for the Lower Base Sewer Project. The consultant also will be required to document and create a final report acceptable by CUC and the CNMI Historical Preservation Office. CUC requires the Project to be completed as per the Request for Proposal (RFP) highlights from the date of award of contract.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States Economic Development Authority (USEDA) and the Department of Interior (USDOI). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEDA and USDOI.

Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RFP may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $50.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set.

A Pre-Proposal Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **April 18, 2019 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building. Prospective Proposers are mandated to attend the Pre-Proposal Conference and Site Visit.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-19-017 Archeological Monitoring for Lower Base Sewer Phase 1 – Lift Station and Forcemain, " to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on May 10, 2019**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible Proposers who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing Proposers.

Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on April 22th 2019**, to Manny B. Sablan, CUC's Purchasing Administrator via email at manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie L. Sablan via email at christie.sablan@cucgov.org CUC's Purchasing Assistant and to Travis Spaeth, CUC's Project Engineer via email at travis.spaeth@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Zoning Board
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 Tel. 670-234-9661, FAX 234-9666
E-mail ZoningBoard@zoning.gov.mp

Mariano Taitano, Treasurer
Joe E. Ayuyu, Jr., Secretary
Patrick Reyes, Member

NOTICE OF PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETINGS FOR SLL 20-25, NUISANCE ABATEMENT & BLIGHTED PROPERTY MAINTENANCE ACT OF 2018

The Zoning Office will be conducting several Public Outreach and Education Awareness meetings at specified locations around the island with community members, businesses, developers, property-owners, or any interested members of the general public. The first meeting to be held at the **Dandan Middle School on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 5:30pm.**

These meetings are intended to engage the public and discuss **SLL 20-25 Nuisance Abatement & Blighted Property Maintenance Act of 2018.**

The scheduled public outreach meetings within targeted villages are as follows:

DATE	PLACE	TIME
March 12, 2019 – Tues.	Dandan Middle School cafeteria, Dandan	5:30pm
March 14, 2019 – Thurs.	Saipan Southern High School cafeteria, Koblerville	5:30pm
March 19, 2019 – Tues.	Kagman High School cafeteria, Kagman	5:30pm
March 21, 2019 – Thurs.	Tanapag Middle School cafeteria, Tanapag	5:30pm
April 2, 2019 – Tues.	Multipurpose Center, Susupe	5:30pm
April 9, 2019 – Tues.	**GTC Elementary School cafeteria, San Roque**	**5:30pm**
April 16, 2019 – Tues.	**Garapan Elementary School cafeteria, Garapan**	**5:30pm**

The Zoning Board and Office encourages the public to join and attend the meetings to learn more about **SLL 20-25 Nuisance Abatement & Blighted Property Maintenance Act of 2018.**

SLL 20-25 may be viewed and downloaded from our website at www.zoning.gov.mp

For more information, please call the Zoning Office at 234-9661 or visit the office located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building located in Dandan.

More discussion, clarifications sought on 4 bills

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House Ways and Means Committee has decided to table four bills, in order to further discuss their contents and purposes.

House Bills 21-4, 2-5, 21-12, and 21-12 were on the agenda when the committee met last week but committee chair Rep. Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan) said that, in the case of H.B. 21-5, which aims to prioritize funding for the CNMI Medicaid Agency and the indigent program of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., he said he wants more information from CHCC.

Blanco

"We want to reach out to CHCC to find out who falls under uncompensated care and how much per person. For example, when we give money to uncompensated care, we don't say 'uncompensated care'; we say indigent. There's a different definition from CHCC. …Our intent is [to define] indigents [as] those who can't afford [to pay]," Blanco told *Saipan Tribune*.

With "indigent" defined as those who can't afford to pay their hospital bill, there are other individuals who could fall into that category, he said.

"What about overstayers? Those who don't have a status or were affected by the CW1 cap—are they also indigent? But the hospital can't turn them away, because when [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services] took over federal immigration, we believe that overstayers are [also] under their care. If they are going to the hospital, we're going to pick up the tab," he said.

Blanco said the committee wants to know how the hospital would specifically define "indigent"—whether they are overstayers, of Northern Marianas descent, or citizens of Freely Associated States, like those from the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, or Palau. "

So, we would be able to target how much money would go to each [group]," he said. "If it's overstayers and…FAS [citizens], can we…bill…the federal government? I know the federal government provides Compact Impact funds for FAS citizens. I don't know if that's enough but, for the overstayers, what would we do? That's why, we tabled the bill."

Also tabled was H.B. 21-4, which would include the Marianas Visitors Authority and the Office of the Public Auditor among the agencies exempted from the salary limitations imposed by the Compensation Adjustment Act.

He said this was the recommendation of Public Auditor Michael Pai "because there's an earlier bill that, even if we adopt this one and pass it, it would still not allow him to… raise the ceiling for the salary."

The other two bills are: H.B. 21-12, which would establish the level of funding for the Legislature and provide the Legislature with control over the expenditure of funds appropriated for its operations and H.B. 21-15, which aims to amend the disposition of the gross revenue tax.

'Dispose of prescription drugs properly'

In light of a recent report from the public that prescription drugs had been found in a public location, the Office of the Attorney General consumer counsel, in partnership with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Bureau of Environmental Health and Division of Public Health Services, would like to remind the public to never ingest unknown medicines, especially medicines found in public spaces.

Many drugs may have harmful side-effects that can lead to medical problems and death. Unknown containers of medication can also be subject to contamination and tampering. Prescription medications should only be taken if prescribed by a qualified health professional, and should only be taken as prescribed. Drugs are also subject to expiration.

Unused and expired drugs should always be disposed of promptly and properly. Each year, the Drug Enforcement Administration extends a drug take-back program in the CNMI. Drug take-back programs are the recommended method for safe disposal of unused and expired medications. The public can also return any unused and unwanted medications to any of the pharmacies on island: the CHCC Outpatient Pharmacy, PHI Pharmacy, and Brabu Pharmacy.

For any questions, contact the BEH at (670) 664-4870/2/3/, or email John Tagabuel, director of BEH, at john.tagabuel@dph.gov.mp.

You can also contact Lawrence Pangelinan, chief investigator of AGID, at the Office of the Attorney General at (670) 286-5627, lawrence.pangelinan@cnmioag.org, or Michele Harris, consumer counsel, at (670) 237-7500, michele.harris@cnmioag.org.

For more information about CHCC programs, follow it on Facebook and Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out its website at www.chcc.gov.mp, or call (670) 234-8950. ***(PR)***

ANTI-FIRE CLEARING

Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Christopher S. Tenorio, extreme left, poses for a group photo with staff of CPA and the Saipan Mayor's Office behind the fuel farm near Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Thursday. Tenorio is thankful to Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang for sending his crew to assist CPA in clearing the area to prevent forest fires. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PUBLIC DISCLAIMER NOTICE

Ketson Jack Kabiriel is no longer employed by Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc., and Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. is not affiliated with a company called Pacific Blaze in any manner. Any claims by operatives of Pacific Blaze that there is an affiliation are false. Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. is not responsible for any liability as a result of misrepresentation, or error, by Pacific Blaze.

Both before and after the termination of employment of Ketson Jack Kabiriel from Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc., there has been confusion by the public concerning Mr. Kabiriel's status with Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. and Pacific Blaze, Inc., a company formed while Mr. Kabiriel was employed at Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc..

Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. will protect the health and safety of the individuals, families, homes, government offices and personnel and businesses in the CNMI by making available quality health and safety products meeting all standards established by federal and local applicable law, and by employing trained, certified and qualified personnel.

Before any company or individual is retained to sell, inspect or refill your fire systems and portable fire extinguishers, make sure those companies or individuals meet standards established within NFPA 10 requirement guidelines. Ask to see the certificate of compliance credentials of those doing the work. When hydrostatic testing is to be performed, make sure the service operative has the necessary and required NFPA standard equipment to perform those services.

Safety 1st Systems is proud to have been a part of the CNMI since 1993, and will continue to meet the expectations of our customers. We further claim and guarantee to meet or exceed pricing by any competitor in the CNMI for our products and services. If you can find it cheaper, we will beat any reasonable price offered by any company in the CNMI.

Owners and Management of Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc.

CNMI DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
AMERICA'S SBDC CNMI
CDA COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Learn About How to Write a Business Plan

This seminar will cover all the elements to be included in a business plan and explain with examples what is required in each section. The focus of the seminar will be the three M's – Money, Management, & Marketing. Participants will also be provided with a sample business plan, sources of industry research information, and introduced to online business planning tools that are accessible at any time through an internet enabled PC.

Get tips and advice on:

- Tools to use for your business plan
- Resources for your small business

TO REGISTER:
https://pisbdcn.ecenterdirect.com/events/4341

For more information, visit our website at www.pacificsbdc.com or call
CNMI SBDC Office at 664-3018

Date: April 16, 2019
Time: 9:00AM- 11:00AM

FREE TRAINING

Location:
CDA Board Room,
1st Floor, San Jose

Presented by:

Nicole Babauta
Director &
Business Advisor
CNMI SBDC

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Training teaches CHCC staff how to combat opioid abuse

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Staff of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. were recently trained on specific interventions to address the abuse of opioids, or medicines designed to combat and mitigate pain.

CHCC Community Guidance Center's Recovery Clinic staff underwent pain management cognitive behavioral therapy at the Kanoa Resort from March 6 to 8, 2019.

Opioids are a class of drugs that includes heroin, as well as other synthetic compounds such as fentanyl and pain relievers available legally through prescriptions such as oxycodone, hydrocodone or vicodin, codeine, and morphine.

"While drugs in this class are commonly prescribed because they are effective at relieving pain, they are also highly addictive," CHCC noted in a statement, adding that opioid-related deaths have skyrocketed in the U.S. with an estimated 130 deaths per day related to opioid overdose.

As for now, there is no evidence to suggest that the CNMI has a significant problem with opioid abuse, CHCC noted.

Dr. Christopher Rocchio, Dr. James Peck, and Dr. Kevin Kunz were invited to provide the training. The three are experts from the Opioid State Targeted Technical Assistance Effort.

A total of 37 CGC staff attended the training, among them physicians, nurses, dentists, social workers, behavioral health professionals, pharmacists, and pharmacy staff.

"The CGC aims to increase clinical capacity to address problematic substance use in the CNMI," CHCC noted. "[This training] was meant to educate providers about opioids and the potential for addiction, as well as learn alternative approaches to deal with the pain."

The CGC urges individuals who have concerns with opioid use disorder or addiction that may have developed due to being prescribed medicine for pain relief to call their offices to seek more information as well as connection to services at 323-6560 or 323-6561. You may also reach out through email at cgc.recovery-clinic@gmail.com.

"Opioids are very addictive, and although they are often necessary to help alleviate pain, it is in the best interest of the individual and their family to request their primary care provider's consultation and recommendation for alternative medication to prevent possible issues of misuse, abuse, and the onset of addiction," CHCC noted. "By taking a step-by-step approach through guided psychosocial education and interventions utilizing [Cognitive-behavioral therapy] for chronic pain, the CGC hopes to assist individuals and their families in preventing opioid use disorders."

SIS installs window films to protect students

The glass on windows and doors of a school building can be a very vulnerable entry point into a school, yet installing window films helps mitigate any threat, whether from intruders or weather disturbances like typhoon.

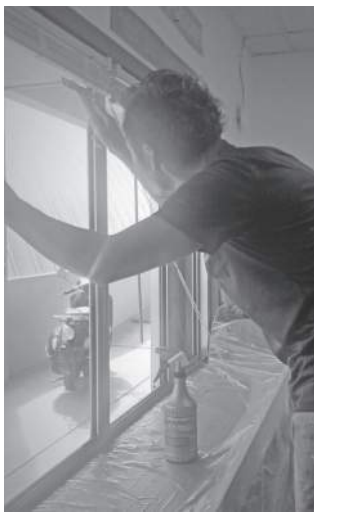
3M is currently offering a special discount to CNMI schools to help protect students of the Commonwealth. It does this with the installation of window films to help protect this potential entry point.

This acts as a deterrent and provides extra response time if an intruder attempts to enter the building. It also deters breaking and entering by slowing the entry and preventing shattering during break-ins, typhoons or something as simple as a miskicked soccer ball.

Currently, several hundred schools across the mainland have already installed window films on their windows and 3M has just completed the installation of window films at Saipan International School.

3M is currently offering a special discount to CNMI schools to help protect students of the Commonwealth. It does this with the installation of window films to help protect this potential entry point. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SIS headmaster Dr. Ron Snyder said he is very happy that SIS is the first school in the CNMI to take advantage of 3M's special price but he hopes that it isn't the last.



A 3M window film is installed on a window at a classroom building at the Saipan International School. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"This puts the safety of the children first and is a great option for schools across the CNMI. Depending on the film type, it also has other benefits. We chose a film that is extra thick and polarized. Not only does it protect our students and facilities, it also blocks about 75 percent of ultraviolet radiation and nearly 100 percent of thermal radiation. That should drive our operational expenses down and help us build better programs for our students," he said. ***(PR)***

MARIANAS MEDICAL CENTER

is seeking for U.S. qualified workers for the following position:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES:

Board and Management Company Administration and Support - The CEO supports the operations and administration of the Board of Directors and Marianas Medical Center's (MMC) Management Team by maintaining continual, open and effective communication between the Board, the MMC Management Team, and the Medical Staff.

Medical Staff Liaison - The CEO facilitates relationships between the physicians and recognizes that the ongoing strength and success of the organizations relies heavily on the strength and success of our medical staff and engages them accordingly. The CEO also participates in issues surrounding ethics and quality.

Community and Public Relations - Through exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, the CEO assures that the MMC & Pacific Laboratories consistently present a strong, positive image in the CNMI community.

Compliance - The CEO will ensure that MMC & Pacific Laboratories comply with local and U.S. federal laws and regulations as they apply to operations of the clinic.

Strategic Planning - The CEO stays current with the healthcare industry conditions and their potential impact on the organizations' policies and operations. The CEO develops the short-term and long-term strategic plan for the clinic and the services it offers. The CEO ensures the plan is articulated both internally and externally, and effectively delegates key activities to ensure timely execution of the strategic plan initiatives. The CEO assists in developing strategies and implementation plans to improve and standardize all aspects of operations. The CEO tracks resource utilization and manages that data to assist with efficiencies of clinic operations.

Delivery of Healthcare Services - The CEO has overall responsibility for the design, marketing, promotion, delivery, risk management and quality of all healthcare programs and services provided to the community. The CEO ensures that policies and practices effectively support safe patient care, and that the delivery of healthcare services provides the highest level of a positive experience to the patient.

Financial Management - The CEO prepares budget and contingency plans and recommends yearly budgets for Board and Management Company approval and ensures prudent management of the resources within those budgetary guidelines according to current local and U.S. federal laws and regulations. The CEO ensures that operational processes are within the agreed budgets and timelines. The CEO directs and oversees the billing and revenue cycle functions of the clinic and is accountable for the development implementation of business processes that meet or exceed expectations.

Human Resources Management - The CEO ensures effective management of the human resources of the clinic according to current, authorized personnel policies and procedures that fully conform to current local and U.S. federal laws and regulations.

Facilities Management - The CEO oversees the preservation of the asset value of the clinic's capital investments, oversees the management of construction and facility activities, and ensures disaster and emergency preparedness activities are appropriately planned, exercised and documented.

Supervisory responsibilities - The CEO directly supervises the Director for Medical Services, General Manager, Billing Manager and Accountant.

The CEO will perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

The CEO follows all HIPAA guidelines and maintains confidentiality at all times.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree in Healthcare Administration or relevant field;
- Master's degree strongly preferred in Healthcare Administration (but not required);
- Must have at least five (5) years of directly related experience with healthcare facilities including two (2) years in a supervisory role; and
- Must have good communication skills, critical thinking skills and demonstrated flexibility and the ability to continually address and shift priorities, meet deadlines and work in a fast-paced working environment;

Interested individuals please send your resume with a list of references, photocopy of a valid photo identification card & updated police clearance to:

Polly Dlg. Masga, HR Manager
Marianas Medical Center
P.O. Box 5006 CHRB
Saipan, MP 96950
Contact no. 670-234-3926
E-mail: polly.masga@mmcsaipan.com

WE ARE AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 234-5498 ext. 6824/23
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu • Website: www.marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS

NMC IFB 19-003

Repair/Rebuild damaged sections of the CREES Agricultural Equipment Facility, Tinian

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement of construction services for the Repair/Rebuild damaged sections of the CREES Agricultural Equipment Facility, Tinian.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. O, commencing Monday, April 15th between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

Bidders located outside of the CNMI may request a copy of the IFB via email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Bid Packages are due no later than 10:00 a.m., May 15, 2019, CNMI date and time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. O, Saipan, MP 96950. You may request a copy of the NMC IFB 19-003 packet attention Anita Camacho at email anita.camacho@marianas.edu.

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through the USDA-NIFA authorized under the Hatch Act, as amended August 11, 1955, award # 2018-31100 (Regular)

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all bid offers for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
NMHC RFP 2019-004
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DATE: May 09, 2019 TIME: 10:00 AM

Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program Consulting Services

Proposal package will be available on April 05, 2019, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays or you may obtain the proposal package online at www.nmhcgov.net "Public Notice/Announcements" subtitle "Request for Proposal".

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference** will be held at **10:00 a.m.** on April 25, 2019, at the NMHC Central Office Conference Room in Garapan. Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-proposal conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/7689; (670)483-9447; or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Aubry Hocog
Chairman, NMHC Board of Directors

/s/ Joaquim S. Reyes, Acting Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

JEMFAC meeting highlights RMI use of Compact grant funds

WASHINGTON, D.C—The mid-year meeting by the Joint Economic Management Financial Accountability Committee on March 21, 2019, in Majuro, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands highlighted the successes of the Compact of Free Association partnership between the federal government and the Marshall Islands government.

"The…partnership that we share has continued to provide important services and mutual benefits ever since we embarked on this special relationship nearly 35 years ago," said Doug Domenech, U.S. Department of the Interior assistant secretary, Insular and International Affairs.

Domenech said the Interior Department is happy to support and facilitate the United States' relationship with the Marshall Islands "and are pleased to see the impacts for good."

At the JEMFAC meeting, members were apprised of ongoing use of Compact sector grant funding in the Marshall Islands. In fiscal year 2019, as provided for under the Compact of Free Association, the RMI government received approximately $36 million in grant funding with an additional $16 million deposited in the Compact Trust Fund for the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The U.S. Department of the Interior administers these funds.

As described in the Compact of Free Association, U.S. Public Law 108-188, the JEMFAC has several responsibilities, some of which are to review the following: 1) planning and budgeting documents for proposed Compact sector grant funding; 2) Single Audits; and 3) performance outcomes on the use of Compact funding.

U.S. ambassador to the Marshall Islands Karen Stewart, Marshall Islands Minister of Health Kalani Kaneko, and other Republic of the Marshall Islands government officials and health providers have their picture taken on March 21, 2019. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Mid-Year Joint Economic Management Financial Accountability Committee meeting in Majuro on March 21, 2019.

The primary sectors supported through the Compact are health, education, and public infrastructure.

JEMFAC is composed of the following U.S. and RMI members: committee chair Nikolao Pula (U.S. Department of the Interior), vice chair John Silk (RMI Minister of Foreign Affairs), Brenson Wase (RMI Minister of Finance), Nicholas Dean (U.S. Department of State), and William Gallo (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

The JEMFAC mid-year meeting included the U.S. ambassador to the RMI Karen Stewart, RMI Minister-in-Assistance David Paul, RMI Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Tony Muller, RMI Health Minister Kalani Kaneko, and other RMI government officials.

The JEMFAC plans to reconvene in early September 2019 to review budget proposals and allocate Compact sector grant funding to support the RMI government during fiscal year 2020.

» $1.1M to fight tuberculosis OK'd

Single audits

Under U.S. law, annual single audits are required to monitor the overall financial management and use of Compact sector grant funding. The fiscal year 2017 Single Audit performed revealed that, out of an approximate $36 million provided under the Compact in the same year, $397,814 were considered questioned costs. This number was increased from $29,458 in fiscal year 2016, $30,155 in fiscal year 2015, $12,921 in fiscal year 2014, and $63,645 in fiscal year 2013. U.S. Department of the Interior staff work closely with the RMI government, and all U.S. Insular Area governments, to address all questioned costs under the annual single audits.

Health

RMI Ministry of Health officials provided an important update on their efforts to combat tuberculosis in the Marshall Islands.

Having one of the worst rates of TB in the Pacific, the RMI has been working with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to eradicate the disease with Compact health sector grant support.

Last year, in fiscal year 2018, JEMFAC granted the RMI government $1.1 million to conduct mass TB screening. They returned to report an astonishing 85 percent screening completion rate, finding 307 active TB cases, 4,897 latent TB cases, and 54 new cases of leprosy.

To date, nearly 100 percent of the latent TB cases and 30 percent of the active cases have completed treatment.

At this mid-year meeting, JEMFAC awarded additional support, in the amount of $1,110,431 for fiscal year 2019, to complete the treatment for those screened and remove TB as a public health concern in the RMI.

"The RMI Ministry of Health has achieved a remarkably difficult task, and their success is a direct result of their preparation with traditional leaders, a focus on community outreach, and coordination with several RMI agencies and partners," said Dr. Richard Brostrom, CDC TB Medical Officer for the U.S. Pacific Insular Areas, who attended the JEMFAC meeting. "Their work to protect over 4,500 people with TB prevention is of tremendous international interest and has set a new standard for the Pacific region. It is a big step towards a TB-Free Marshall Islands!"

Education

In fiscal year 2018, the RMI Ministry of Education received about $21 million in U.S. federal grants, which was a combination of Compact education sector grant funding, Ebeye Special Needs Grants also provided through the Compact, as well as Supplemental Education Grants and Special Education Grants both provided through the U.S. Department of Education. Combined, these funds account for approximately 87 percent of the RMI government's annual K-12 education operating budget and 67 percent of the entire educational system, which includes the College of the Marshall Islands.

In prior years, Compact education sector grants once accounted for a higher percentage of the RMI education budgets; however, the RMI government has been increasing local revenue contributions.

The Marshall Islands has more than 14,000 students enrolled across 112 K-12 schools, all of which have been evaluated under the RMI government local accreditation policy. The RMI continues to work on improving the reliability of data and the integrity of the accreditation system.

Public infrastructure

The RMI government has been successful in its use of Compact public infrastructure grants for health and education sector projects all throughout the Marshall Islands. Construction has either been completed or is ongoing on classroom buildings, administration buildings, and restroom facilities at 31 secondary schools and two high schools in Majuro and the outer islands such as Nallu, Mili, and Jaluit.

The RMI has also renovated 18 health centers throughout the RMI. Under the Ebeye Special Needs and Kwajalein Impact Fund programs, seawall projects, sidewalk repairs, and water and sanitation projects are also either ongoing or completed such as basketball courts and a beach park on Ebeye. ***(PR)***

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Easter Sunday
BRUNCH
SUNDAY
APRIL 21, 2019
at Kanoa Resort
ENJOY OUR EASTER SUNDAY
BRUNCH BUFFET AT THE ISLA CAFÉ.
Open from 11am~2pm, you can enjoy a delicious variety of local and international dishes paired with a live carving station and bottomless Budweiser & Sparkling Wine.
Kids are welcome to join our free* Easter Egg Hunt!
*Please present Easter Sunday Brunch receipt to participate.
Egg hunt starts at 1pm at the Isla Garden.
$37* adults / $18 kids (4-11 yrs old)
*Resident discount applies with valid ID
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Opinion

Hafa Adai
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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EDITORIAL

An eviction notice for WikiLeaks' Julian Assange, and a date with justice

Long ago, Julian Assange wore out his welcome at Ecuador's London embassy. Ecuador shut off his access to the internet in 2016 after WikiLeaks published emails from the Hillary Clinton campaign that had been pilfered by Russian hackers. Embassy officials grew weary of what they called his "discourteous and aggressive behavior." They even griped that he needed to do a better job cleaning up after his cat.

Assange got his eviction notice Thursday. Ecuador formally rescinded the asylum that had allowed him to hide from justice for nearly seven years. Then, the Ecuadorians invited British police inside to meet Assange and take him away. The WikiLeaks founder, 47 and sporting an unruly gray beard, physically resisted and shouted, "This is unlawful!" as officers carried him to a waiting police van. Hope he made arrangements with a cat sitter.

Assange now could be headed for a courtroom in the U.S., where he would face charges that he conspired with Chelsea Manning to hack into a classified Defense Department computer in 2010.

At the time Manning, then known as Bradley Manning, was a U.S. Army intelligence analyst who illegally obtained reams of secret military and diplomatic documents, and then passed them on to Assange's WikiLeaks organization, which published them. Convicted of Espionage Act violations, Manning served seven years of a 35-year prison term before President Barack Obama commuted her sentence.

Now Assange will have his day in court, something he had deftly evaded for so long.

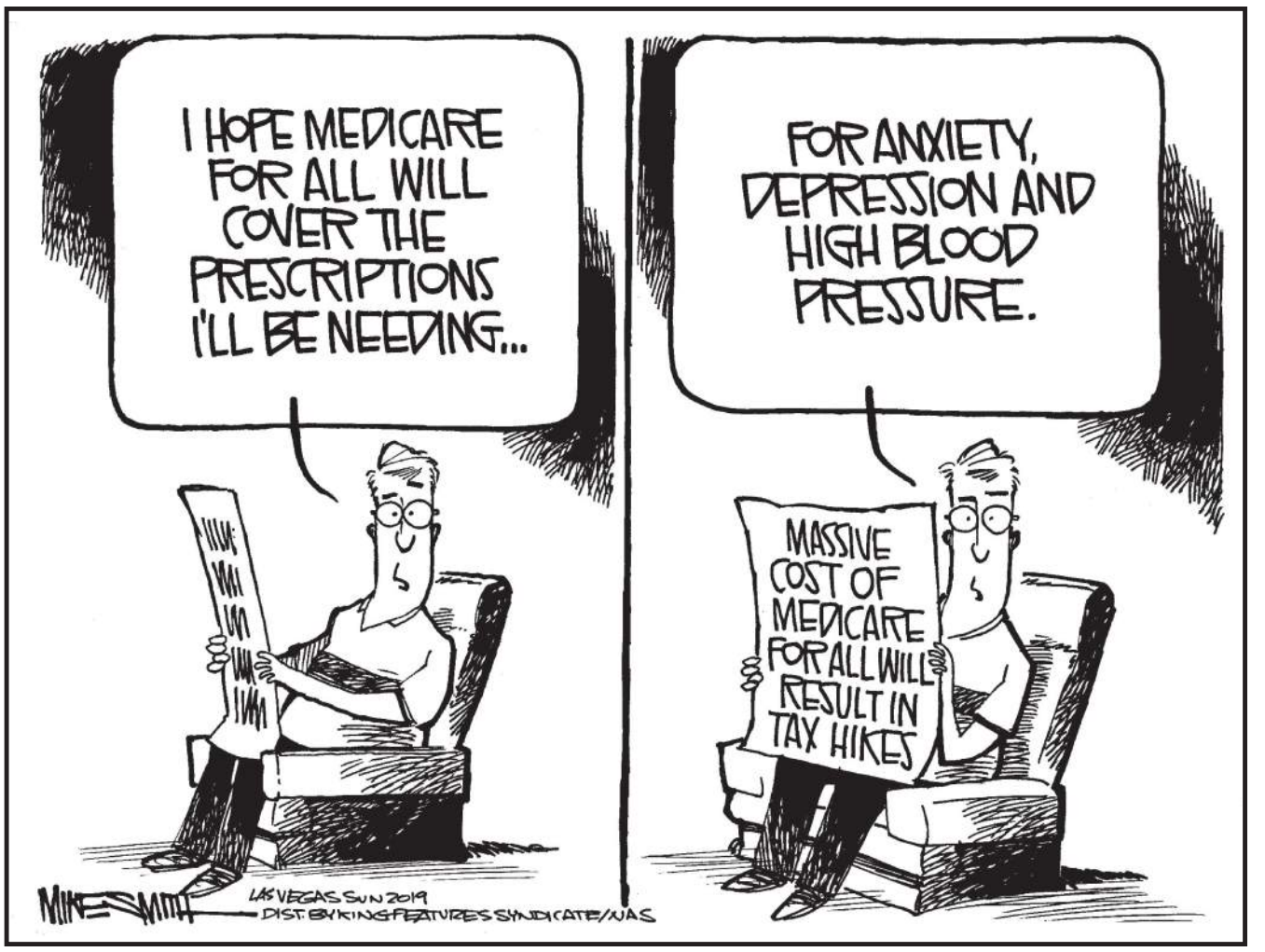
It wasn't just U.S. justice that he hid from. Sweden wanted to question him in a sex crimes inquiry but dropped the case in 2017 after deciding there was little chance he would ever leave the embassy. Britain wanted him for skipping bail in 2012 set in connection with the Swedish case.

Soon after Thursday's arrest, Assange had his first date with justice. He was brought to a London courtroom where he was found guilty of jumping bail. He faces up to a year in prison for that conviction. The U.S. request to extradite Assange is slated to come up in a British court in May.

The world will soon see whether the U.S. case against Assange has merit. Press freedom advocates denounce Assange's arrest. But there's an important distinction in the charges Assange faces. They focus on the active role he allegedly played in helping Manning get the documents. It's one thing to publish secret documents. That's sometimes part of the legitimate work of journalism. But helping Manning crack a Pentagon password to pilfer the documents, as the indictment alleges, is something different. With Assange protected from America's reach, the WikiLeaks-Russian effort to meddle in the 2016 U.S. presidential election proceeded.

Ecuador's decision to hand Assange over had been a long time coming—too long. He was the embassy Guest Who Wouldn't Leave. Now, finally, Assange has moved on to new lodgings—for the time being courtesy of the British authorities.

(c)2019 *Chicago Tribune*


I HOPE MEDICARE FOR ALL WILL COVER THE PRESCRIPTIONS I'LL BE NEEDING...
FOR ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.
MASSIVE COST OF MEDICARE FOR ALL WILL RESULT IN TAX HIKES
MIKE SMITH
LAS VEGAS SUN 2019
DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/NAS

Communicate with parents concerned about vaccines

By MEREDITH ALSTON
The Baltimore Sun

Meredith Alston works for the Anne Arundel County Department of Health.

Over the years, I have noticed a steady increase in anti-vaccine misinformation circulating on social media. I find it troubling, but I am somewhat reassured because for every anti-vaccine click-bait article posted, there are 20 other posts urging parents to follow their pediatrician's vaccine schedule. So when I read that there was a confirmed case of the measles in Baltimore recently, I was alarmed but not surprised.

My first reaction is anger: How could anyone deny the indisputable evidence from hundreds of studies that prove the safety and efficacy of childhood immunizations? My second reaction is fear—not only for the unvaccinated children, but for the babies too young to be immunized, as well as immunocompromised adults. Scrolling through hundreds of Facebook comments, I see that I am not alone in my fear and outrage. "Vaccinate your damn kids!" one angry father writes. "I'm never leaving the house again," an 8-week-old infant's mother laments. Their feelings are understandable; it's hard to understand the logic behind refusing to vaccinate children, and it's easy to blame their parents.

Still, I wonder how this blame-game will play out: Will the mountains of scientific evidence behind vaccines convince vaccine-hesitant parents, or will it push them farther into the depths of internet conspiracy black holes insisting that vaccines cause autism? I'd put money on the latter.

In my health communications class in college, vaccines were a month-long topic of discussion. But rather than focusing on the debate itself, we learned how to communicate with vaccine-hesitant parents. We learned about confirmation bias: the tendency to seek out information that confirms what we already believe. We learned that bombarding vaccine-hesitant parents with research and data would likely never change their minds, because being an "anti-vaxxer" is more than just a belief; it's an identity. We learned that calling parents who are opposed to, or hesitant of vaccinating their children "anti-vaxxers" only feeds into this identity and pushes them farther away.

My perspective on how we should communicate with parents who express concerns or hesitations about vaccines changed. I discovered that more often than not, their decisions were based on the best information they have at the time.

I have a 9-month-old baby with a severe breathing disorder. I noticed that her breathing was off when she was just 2 days old. When I asked her pediatrician, he flippantly said "Oh, not to worry. Babies just make a lot of noise." He dismissed my concerns, even when I insisted that there was something clearly wrong with her. A few days later she was projectile vomiting and gasping for air, so we rushed to the Emergency Department where she was admitted and diagnosed her with severe laryngomalacia, a condition that would require surgery to correct.

I was outraged. Why had her pediatrician not taken just a few minutes more to hear me out? The experience left me angry and distrustful, but it gave me a new perspective; vaccine-hesitant parents want what I wanted: their fears and concerns to be addressed, not disregarded. They want to be a part of the decision-making when it comes to their child's health care, and above all, they want what's best for their children.

It's challenging for pediatricians, nurses and other public health professionals to interact with these parents because we see the imminent danger in their misinformed decision. But instead of turning them away, what if we made more an effort to bring them in?

A 2005 study on immunization attitudes and beliefs among parents found that that their views on vaccines aren't as black and white as they may seem. In fact, five clusters of parents were identified; their beliefs ranged from immunization advocates to parents who were worried that vaccines would harm their children. Another national survey in 2000 found that a substantial number of parents believe that their child's immune system could be weakened by vaccines and that children get more vaccines than are good for them. Both studies came to the same conclusion: Children's health care providers are the most important source of information on immunizations.

Vaccines are one of the most important public health advances of our time, but we still have a long way to go in addressing common misconceptions to ensure informed decision-making. Pediatricians, primary care doctors and public health workers have the opportunity to contribute to this educational effort through respectful, well-informed and compassionate dialogue with parents. We all want what's best for our children; we just need to right information to get there.

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Where's overtime pay for our Yutu frontline workers?

Author's Note: The following is a privileged speech I read during last Friday's House session. I updated and edited it to reflect the delivery of the 2.5x list of recipients that we finally received from the Office of Management and Budget.

"Mr. speaker and colleagues: I am deeply concerned for the dozens, if not hundreds, of CNMI non-exempted government workers who are awaiting their 2.5x overtime pay they earned during the relief and recovery efforts after [Super] Typhoon Yutu devastated our islands of Saipan and Tinian back in October of 2018.

These valiant frontline government workers left their destroyed homes and drove their damaged vehicles so they could aid and assist our people. They worked long days and nights and removed fallen telephone poles and debris along stretches of roads and beaches, delivered food and water to our shelters and homes, set up hundreds of tents for families who lost their homes, and performed many other heroic deeds as needed. Their noble sacrifices have often been acknowledged and applauded, but appreciation and accolades do not pay their bills. Let us praise them but also *pay* them.

I have talked with many of these workers and their spouses, either in person or over the phone. Their stories are heartbreaking. All of them share the same frustrations and the same need for compensation. This 2.5x overtime compensation is needed to help them repair and rebuild their damaged homes and cars. Many of them said they did not get [Small Business Administration] loans because they didn't qualify, or because they did not want to go deeper into debt, or because they did not want to put their homes up as collateral for the loan. Whatever the case is, the bottom line is they *earned* their overtime pay and have not received reasonable explanations as to why they haven't gotten paid, or more importantly, when they will be paid.

Many of these frontline workers were asked to write letters to their superiors justifying why they should get paid or why they need the overtime pay. If anyone should be writing letters, it is elected and appointed officials, to apologize for our failure to pay these workers their 2.5x compensation for overtime that they were promised and have earned.

There seems to be confusion and some misunderstanding when it comes to compensating our non-exempted government workers. The government workers and their spouses that I communicated with believed that [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] hasn't reimbursed the CNMI government and that the reimbursements will come on April 30 and June 30. I explained to these workers that the two dates mentioned are insignificant and irrelevant to FEMA, and shared with them what a FEMA official told me in an email correspondence. This FEMA official wrote, "FEMA reimbursement of 'Emergency Work' is not limited to a specific schedule. We do not have deadlines or disbursements related to April 30 or June 30. When FEMA receives supporting documents for reimbursement, we must certify the expenses are related to the reimbursement category and that the amounts are reasonable. Some of that review takes some back and forth cooperation, but FEMA is not withholding reimbursement with any specific target date. As soon as validation of reimbursable expenses are accomplished, they are submitted for release."

Our government workers need to be properly informed that the FEMA process for "Emergency Work" is a reimbursement program. Once the CNMI government pays its workers what is owed them, FEMA can then reimburse the CNMI government. It is equally important that we give our government workers a date as to when they will get paid.

Mr. speaker and colleagues, let us be open and honest with our government workers and admit to them that the CNMI government is currently having a cash flow problem and that there isn't enough money to pay what is owed them. If this is the case, as it appears to be, and FEMA is willing to reimburse our government 100 percent for the emergency work that includes the 2.5x overtime compensation, then why can't we explore the possibility of looking into a short-term loan with MPLT? As soon as we are reimbursed by FEMA for the 2.5x overtime pay, we then immediately pay off the short-term loan with MPLT. If this is not possible, then can we work together with the administration in exploring other options or possibilities? I am asking for these frontline workers.

On another note, I am pleased to know that we finally received the 2.5x overtime list of paid exempted and non-exempted workers that we asked for in a meeting with acting Finance secretary David Atalig and [Office of Management and Budget's] Virginia Villagomez from one month ago. This list is important so we know who has already been compensated and how many others are still waiting to be compensated. I have only briefly reviewed the list, but am shocked to see some Cabinet members receiving over $36,000 in overtime pay in full while hundreds of frontline workers are still awaiting their pay.

Mr. speaker and colleagues, please note that according to a FEMA official, "The expenses FEMA reimburses must be reasonable and within existing CNMI policy. Some of the test of 'reasonableness' is to determine if the expenses (overtime recipients and rates) are paid out during non-declared emergencies, when there is not federal reimbursement." As per existing CNMI policy and as stated on their NOPA (Notice of Personnel Action), Cabinet members are exempted employees who are not entitled to overtime pay. I do understand that Gov. [Ralph DLG] Torres included Cabinet members in a memo dated back in November of 2018 for Yutu-related overtime compensation. But what is the law that gives him the authority to do so? Please note that I have great respect and gratitude to the Cabinet members for their relief and recovery efforts after Yutu, but we need to ensure that their compensation is fair and reasonable, within existing CNMI policy and practice, and that the governor has the legal authority to allow Cabinet members to receive overtime compensation, even though it is written on their NOPA that they are not entitled to overtime.

Thank you for allowing me to express my concerns to you, Mr. speaker and colleagues. It is my sincere hope that we work together with the [Torres] administration in prioritizing and fast tracking the 2.5x overtime pay for our frontline workers. They have done the work. Now let's ensure they get paid what they earned in sweat equity. The hardworking frontline government workers and their families are counting on us.

By EDWIN K. PROPST
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Edwin K. Propst is a member of the House of Representatives, Precinct 1, in the 20th Commonwealth Legislature.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Life-threatening situation aggravated by incompetence

The health of a citizen is fundamental. So nothing is more egregious than to put at risk the healthcare needs of a third of our vulnerable citizens. Since the majority of our citizens in the CNMI fall below the poverty income guideline, this means that all of these individuals are Medicaid-eligible. As a matter of fact, based on recorded data from the CNMI Medicaid office, the number of Medicaid clients climbed to nearly 15,000 individuals in fiscal year 2014.

Suffice it to say these 15,000-plus individuals have no private health insurance coverage (can't afford it) to underwrite their medical treatment at the hospital or private healthcare clinics here or elsewhere. This example should be enough to prove the precarious situation these members of our community face.

Having this information known by our esteemed governor and members of the Legislature for more than four years now, the real question is: What is their end game plan when the federal Medicaid assistance percentage, or FMAP, expires this year?

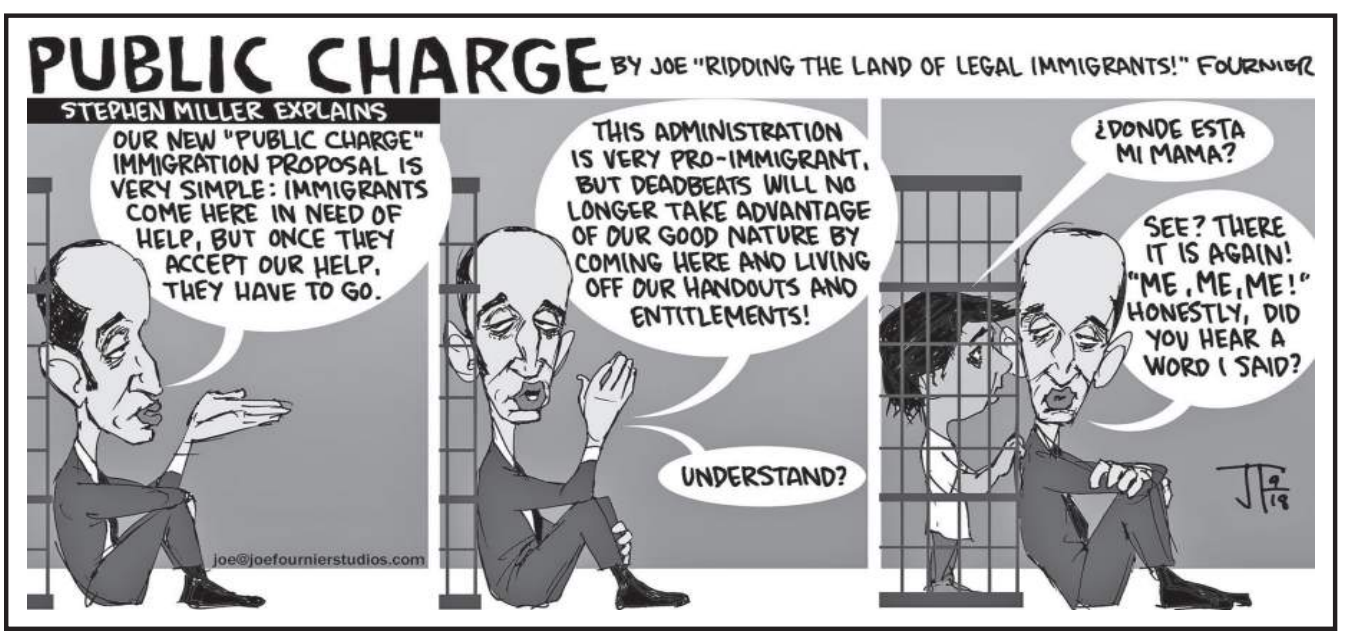
It is bad enough that this administration has failed miserably in its obligation to provide the needed Medicaid matching requirement (45/55 ratio and the unfunded matching obligation is about $14 million), and will now allow these members of our community to go without any kind of health coverage due mainly to the administration's gross negligence, but it is also absolutely unconscionable.

These are the same group of people who were recently elected under their campaign of "super booming economy" led by a very conflicted governor. A governor who has demonstrated, with impunity, his defiance for accountability and transparency in his indiscriminate expenditure of the $20 million "Community Chest" account/funds. This huge amount of money was an agreed obligation paid by Best Sunshine International—as required under the casino license agreement when BSI was given the exclusive casino license in 2014. To this very day, not a single bit of meaningful information regarding how he is using this money has been reported to the public. One wonders if he is worried about some of this money going into the First Lady Dianne Torres Foundation trust account.

The likelihood is that these members of our community, when needing healthcare treatment at our only public hospital, will just aggravate the "uncompensated care/indigent care" costs account. This unpaid healthcare services account at the hospital has a staggering figure of more than $15.8 million and yet not a single member of these "elite leaders" has taken any proactive efforts to mitigate this very serious healthcare deficit.

Our esteemed governor does not have the foresight or the serious leadership to account for this critical need. The Republicans pander for the votes of these citizens just to get elected, but since those people are vulnerable, they are just as easily disposable as well in the minds of the GOP. This is how their formula of reciprocity was applied and used. In other words, these vulnerable members of our community became victims of their "all or nothing" political conquest attempt.

Daniel O. Quitugua
Kannat Tabla, Saipan

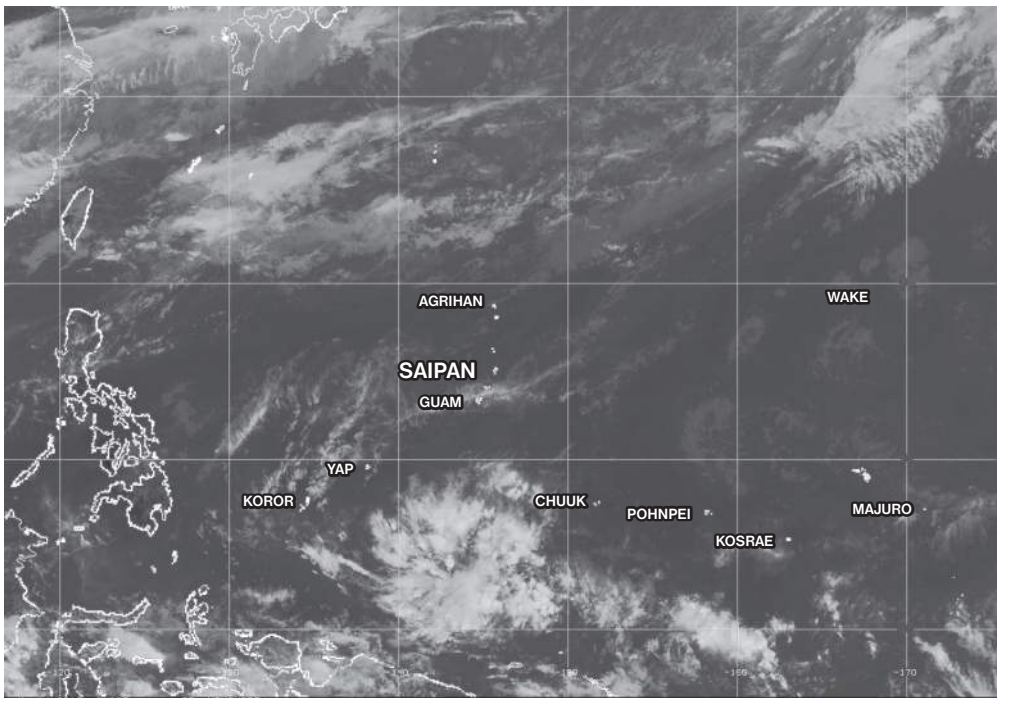

PUBLIC CHARGE
BY JOE "RIDDING THE LAND OF LEGAL IMMIGRANTS!" FOURNIER
STEPHEN MILLER EXPLAINS
OUR NEW "PUBLIC CHARGE" IMMIGRATION PROPOSAL IS VERY SIMPLE: IMMIGRANTS COME HERE IN NEED OF HELP, BUT ONCE THEY ACCEPT OUR HELP, THEY HAVE TO GO.
THIS ADMINISTRATION IS VERY PRO-IMMIGRANT, BUT DEADBEATS WILL NO LONGER TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR GOOD NATURE BY COMING HERE AND LIVING OFF OUR HANDOUTS AND ENTITLEMENTS!
UNDERSTAND?
¿DONDE ESTA MI MAMA?
SEE? THERE IT IS AGAIN! "ME, ME, ME!" HONESTLY, DID YOU HEAR A WORD I SAID?
joe@joefournierstudios.com

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly sunny with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy. Isolated light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy. A slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy. A slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
89° 77°	89° 77°	88° 77°	89° 77°	89° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:54 AM, SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Gentle to moderate trade winds and combined seas of 4 to 6 feet will prevail most of this week.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	87° / 77°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	64° / 54°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	81° / 54°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	79° / 72°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82° / 70°
London	Partly Cloudy	54° / 46°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	68° / 55°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	97° / 81°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	79° / 63°
Miami	Thunderstorms	84° / 72°
New York	Thunderstorms	63° / 48°
Osaka	Sunny	66° / 52°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	63° / 45°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	66° / 52°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	66° / 46°
Salem	Sunny	71° / 48°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	58° / 49°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	64° / 41°
Tokyo	Sunny	66° / 52°
Washington, DC	Showers	70° / 48°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:54 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.87
10:41 AM	LOW TIDE	1.06
3:34 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.65
10:39 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.05

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:03 AM	6:31 PM
Tuesday	6:02 AM	6:31 PM
Wednesday	6:02 AM	6:31 PM
Thursday	6:01 AM	6:31 PM
Friday	6:00 AM	6:31 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	2:35 AM	2:27 PM
Tuesday	-	3:26 AM	3:27 PM
Wednesday	-	4:14 AM	4:27 PM
Thursday	-	5:01 AM	5:26 PM
Friday	-	5:47 AM	6:24 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 1, 2019

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:56am	Daily
UA105	6:25pm	7:05pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 3, 5, 7
7C3451	3:30am	6:30am	4

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	1:35am	5:20am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	8:50pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA117/1939:15am		10:40pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:20am	11:40am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:35am	8:25am	1
UO43	5:50am	8:40am	3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:12am	Daily
UA104	4:50pm	5:31pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	3

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 5, 6
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
OZ625	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ625	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	3:55pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	9:45pm	8:12am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:25pm	8:12am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/174	11:30pm	8:12am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	00:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:25pm	1:20am+1	7
UO42	9:25pm	4:20am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	10:45pm	8:12am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Teteto Beach is No. 1 again at Japan marine diving fair

For the second straight year, Teteto Beach on the island of Rota was selected as the No. 1 Readers' Choice Best Beach at the Dive and Travel Awards of the annual Marine Diving Fair in Japan on April 5-7, 2019.

In addition, Megumi Takaku of Blue Palms Dive Service Rota won first place Readers' Choice Favorite Dive Guide, Overseas, adding accolades to her second-place last year, and Blue Palms won second place, Readers' Choice Favorite Dive Operator, Overseas.

"Once again, Rota is setting the standard in the industry for extraordinary dive and beach experiences and exceptional customer care," said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. ""I, myself, have had the privilege of diving [on] Rota, and I have to say that Rota has the best visibility of any of the islands in the Marianas. The coral reefs, sea life and unique underwater formations make Rota a dive haven. We can all look to the care of the Rota community for the cleanliness and protection of their natural resources and to their hospitality and care for each visitor as an example of what we can offer visitors to each of the islands. …We have much to be proud of."

In addition, Saipan, Tinian, and Rota combined won fourth place for the second year in a row as Readers' Choice Best Diving Area, Overseas, and Managaha won 10th place in Readers' Choice Best Beach.

Diving opportunities on Rota and throughout the Marianas were touted by the MVA to over 50,000 attendees at the fair, which is Japan's leading consumer diving show, targeting consumers and trade representatives in Japan and other Asian countries. The fair was held at the Ikebukuro Sunshine City Convention Center in Tokyo.

The MVA hosted an information booth at the event in the "Ocean, Islands and Travel" section. The MVA showed the movie Diving in The Marianas, distributed diving maps and leaflets, island maps, and other material; and answered questions from attendees at the show, which attracted 100 exhibitors representing destinations, diving shops, underwater camera manufacturers, and other areas of the industry.

In cooperation with MVA, the event was also attended by four members of the Northern Marianas Diving Operations Association. ***(PR)***

The Marianas Visitors Authority attends the 2019 Xi'An Silk Road International Tourism Expo on March 29, 2010, in Shaanxi Province, China. From left, Danny Son, director of Sales and Marketing at Hyatt Regency Saipan; MVA China vice country manager Adam Li; MVA China country manager Florence Shi; MVA managing director Christopher A Concepcion; MVA China Beijing Travel trade manager Tony Zhang; and MVA marketing specialist Laura Hsiao. MVA

From left, Xi'an Television & Broadcast deputy director Xie Wei, Marianas Visitors Authority China deputy country manager Adam Li, and MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion tour Xi'an Television & Broadcast Station where Concepcion also conducted an interview to promote the Marianas during the 2019 Xi'An Silk Road International Tourism Expo on Mar. 29, 2010, in Shaanxi Province, China. MVA

The Marianas Visitors Authority, Brighten Travel, TDI, Impression Tour, Skydive Saipan and Hyatt Regency Saipan promote the Marianas at the 2019 Xi'An Silk Road International Tourism Expo on March 29, 2010, in Shaanxi Province, China. The MVA won an award for "Best Organization Booth" at the expo. MVA

Access road between Fiesta, Hyatt impassable

The public is being advised that the access road between the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan and Hyatt Regency Saipan in Garapan will undergo paving this week and will not be accessible.

In a notice last Friday, it said that the paving project will last three days, from April 15 to April 18, 2019. During that time, vehicles will not be able to enter or exit this access road. ***(PR)***

OPA staff will be on Rota, Tinian

The staff of the Office of the Public Auditor will be in Rota on April 16, 2019, Tuesday, and on Tinian on April 17, 2019, Wednesday, to notarize and accept filings of financial disclosure statements from government officials.

The notice last Friday covers all appointed/elected Commonwealth officials, boards, councils or task force members or directors, commissioners, executive directors including acting (in excess of 90 days) executive director, managing directors, deputy directors, administrators, or similar positions on your board, council, commission, task force or agency:

Filers on Rota may visit the Rota Mayor's Office from 9am to 3pm on Tuesday, April 16.

Filers on Tinian may visit the Tinian Department of Commerce Office from 9am to 3:30pm on Wednesday, April 17.

All filers are reminded to bring with them some form of valid photo identification, such as a driver's license or a passport. Failure to do so may result in the denial of notary services.

For any inquiries, contact OPA at 322-6481 or 6482. ***(PR)***

MVA broadens reach to northwest China

The Marianas Visitors Authority and partners promote the Marianas at the Marine Diving Fair from April 5 to 7, 2019, in Tokyo, Japan. From left are Misayo Wakasugi of Wondersea, Tomoe Yoshida of Big Eye, Hiroshi Yamamoto of Rota Rubin, and Miyuki Ishihara of Super Fish Diving. MVA

Megumi Takaku, right, of Blue Palms Dive Service Rota, wins first place Readers' Choice Favorite Dive Guide, Overseas, at the Dive and Travel Awards presented at the Marine Diving Fair on April 5, 2019, in Tokyo, Japan. Presenting the award is Tetsumi Tateishi, president of Marine Art Center Co., Ltd. MVA

With established presence in key China markets such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, the Marianas Visitors Authority continues to target new markets in the country, including China's vast northwest region.

The MVA recently promoted the Marianas at the 2019 Xi'An Silk Road International Tourism Expo on March 29-31, 2019, in Shaanxi Province. The event attracted more than 500 culture and tourism enterprises from 43 foreign countries and regions and 31 domestic provinces and cities. Five hundred travel buyers also joined the event.

"It's a strategic move to have the Marianas Visitors Authority actively participate in one of the biggest tourism events in western China," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "We took full opportunity to enhance the brand of the Marianas to the local travel industry and the… public, and the response we received about the Marianas was positive. We think these landlocked residents would welcome the chance to experience island life, so we are exploring the opportunity and demand for direct flights from this part of the country."

Concepcion participated in the opening ceremony, was interviewed by media, and joined MVA staff in sharing information with local travel agencies at the MVA booth.

Tourism partners Brighten Travel, TDI, Impression Tour, Skydive Saipan and Hyatt Regency Saipan also took part in the event.

The MVA also received an award for "Best Organization Booth" at the event. ***(PR)***

Keiko Hino of Marianas Visitors Authority's Japan office, right, and Hiroshi Yamamoto of Rota Rubin promote The Marianas at the Marine Diving Fair on Apr. 6, 2019, in Tokyo, Japan. MVA

Marianas Visitors Authority sales manager Kyoko Okabe accepts the awards for Teteto Beach as first place Readers' Choice Best Beach, Overseas, at the Dive and Travel Awards presented at the Marine Diving Fair on April 5, 2019, in Tokyo, Japan. MVA

Court rejects juvenile trial for 17-year-old

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court denied last Monday a bid to have the traffic cases of a 17-year-old male transferred to juvenile court.

Lance Jude Tenorio Camacho, 17, through his lawyer, made the motion to have his cases transferred.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho denied Camacho's motion because, according to the judge, who cited the Commonwealth Code, Camacho falls under one of the exceptions when the traffic court has jurisdiction over a violator's violation, regardless of age.

According to the Commonwealth Code, the chapter does not apply to juvenile violators of non-felony level traffic statutes except a juvenile violator under the age of 16 years at the time of the violation, or if the juvenile is charged with violation of having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.01 percent or more for a person under the age of 21.

Camacho, who was 16 at the time of the incident, was charged with multiple traffic law violations: operating a vehicle without a license, reckless driving, failing to immediately stop a vehicle at the scene of the accident, failing to operate a motor vehicle at a prudent rate of speed, fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer, and being under the influence of alcohol.

Camacho was originally charged with having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.01 percent or more for a person under the age of 21. However, on Feb. 19, the Office of the Attorney amended the charges.

Because Camacho was not charged with having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.01 percent or more for a person under the age of 21 and he was already 16 at the time of the incident, the court had to deny Camacho's motion to be tried in juvenile court.

Triple J supports Red Cross walkathon

From left, Bob Coldeen, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter director; John Hirsh, executive director, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter; Mike Sablan, vice president of Finance & Administration, Triple J Enterprises Inc; Jean D. Sablan, honorary director, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter; Josh Sasamoto, board member, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter; Juan Diego, Disaster Program manager, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter; Mike Mamaril, store manager, Triple J Truckload Store. Second row, from left, Perry Inos, business manager, Triple J Saipan, Inc; Galina Iakomov, assistant general manager, Surfrider Resort.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Triple J group of companies recently donated utility equipment and gift certificates that were used as raffle prizes for last Saturday's 33rd Annual American Red Cross-NMI Chapter Walkathon, plus a cash donation to the American Red Cross itself.

The Triple J Truckload Store gave the NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross pop-up tents, plus gift certificates from the Triple J Restaurant Group for the walkathon raffle. These were on top of monetary support for the American Red Cross NMI Chapter.

"Triple J has been a big supporter of the American Red Cross over the years and we are always grateful for their support," said John Hirsh, executive director of the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter.

"The walkathon is a great student and family activity that reminds us about the importance of giving back to our community," said Hirsh. "As we have all witnessed recently with Super Typhoon Yutu, it is only through the generosity of our donors and support of the community and volunteers alike is the Red Cross able to fulfill its humanitarian mission."

Mike Sablan, vice president of Finance and Administration, Triple J Enterprises, Inc., said: "The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter plays a central role in helping our island community prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. On behalf of Triple J Saipan and its affiliate businesses, we are honored to support the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter and commends their tireless efforts to the CNMI."

The NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross has carried out its humanitarian mission for 40 years. The annual American Red Cross walkathon usually draws a crowd of over 2,500 people each year to raise funds for the NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross.

The NMI Chapter's goal this year is to raise $70,000. ***(PR)***

103.9 KZMI-FM to provide radio coverage at Hyatt's golf tourney

Hyatt Regency Saipan 23rd Annual Charity Golf Classic has received a radio coverage donation from 103.9 KZMI-FM.

With the media coverage sponsorship from 103.9 KZMI-FM Radio, station manager and radio personality Bob Webb will highlight the upcoming event's sponsors, unique airline and hotel stay packages, as well as the tournament's beneficiaries.

The 23rd Annual Charity Golf Classic will take place this year on April 27, 2019.

The donation from 103.9 KZMI-FM Radio will aid this year's beneficiaries: Make-A-Wish Foundation of Guam and CNMI, 500 Sails, NMI Rollers Basketball Association, Isla Montessori School, and 4H Marianas.

"A long-time business partner of 103.9 KZMI-FM, Hyatt Regency Saipan has always made efforts to support our island community. We are proud to be a part of such a mission. This charity tournament is a popular golf event and with its limited golf player spots we encourage and welcome businesses to join in sponsorship as well," said Webb.

Hyatt Regency Saipan Food & Beverage director Tyrell Pauling shares his gratitude with Webb and the 103.9 KZMI-FM Radio team for their continued business partnership and especially for the event partnership. "Hyatt Regency Saipan has partnered with KZMI for a long time; we thank you for your continued support."

103.9 KZMI-FM Radio station broadcasts adult contemporary music with a touch of the Top 40's. ***(PR)***

From left, Ty Pauling, Hyatt Regency Saipan F&B director; Angel Mendoza, Hyatt Regency Saipan graphic artist; Bob Webb, KZMI 103.9 Radio general manager; Danny Son, Hyatt Regency Saipan sales & marketing director; and Zenn Tomokane, Hyatt Regency Saipan executive sous chef.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New Honda car is Hyatt's hole-in-one prize

From left, Matt Deets, Joeten Motors general manager; Jack Deleon Guerrero, Hyatt Regency Saipan front office manager; Angel Mendoza, Hyatt Regency Saipan graphic artist; Peter Tenorio, Joeten Motors operations manager; Ray "Boss" Alvarez, Joeten Motors sales manager; Ty Pauling, Hyatt Regency Saipan Food & Beverage director; and Yasmin Miles, Joeten Motors sales consultant.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Joeten Motors is offering a 2019 Honda HR-V Sport prize valued at $27,995 as a shiny hole-in-one prize at the Hyatt Regency Saipan 23rd Annual Charity Golf Classic, which takes place this year on April 27, 2019.

The donation from Joeten Motors will aid this year's beneficiaries: Make-A-Wish Foundation of Guam and CNMI, 500 Sails, NMI Rollers Basketball Association, Isla Montessori School, and 4H Marianas.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation grants wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses.

500 Sails promotes traditional Chamorro and Carolinian *proa* (canoe) construction and sailing.

NMI Rollers Basketball Association promotes the sport of basketball among the youth.

Isla Montessori School strives to blur the boundaries between the island community and institutional schooling.

4H Marianas promotes agriculture in the Commonwealth.

Matt Deets, general manager of Joeten Motors, said: "Joeten Motors has supported the Hyatt tournament for many years and we are pleased to sponsor it again this year. Good luck to all the players… and thank you to the organizers for what we expect to be another great event"

"Hyatt Regency Saipan is proud to partner with companies like Joeten Motors for the past 23 years in positively impacting our community. The generosity of their donation will continue to provide value to our golfers and help us reach our goal of impacting our five local beneficiaries," said Ty Pauling, Hyatt Regency Saipan Food & Beverage director.

Aside from holding the Nissan franchise, Joeten Motors also offers automobile brands such as Honda, Ford, and Kia, in exclusive U.S. specifications.

In addition to vehicle sales, parts, and service, Joeten Motors also provides products like Ziebart Rust Proof Undercoating, window tinting, car care detailing, Axalta and Nason Automotive Paints and Additives, Bridgestone, Nankang, Nexen Tires and a variety of 3M products. Joeten Motors also carries a wide range of Yamaha Marine and Honda power products lines. It holds the NAPA Auto Parts franchise and the franchise of Quicklane Tire and Auto Center. ***(PR)***

Asian celebrities share stage at MyMarianas festival

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Japanese, Chinese, and South Korean entertainment celebrities shared one stage on Saipan for the first-ever MyMarianas Paradise Festival at the Civic Center in Susupe Saturday night in conjunction with the 38th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival.

A large and raucous crowd watched celebrity performers from China, South Korea, and Japan come together in a free MyParadise Festival concert that was intended to send the message to the international community that the CNMI is "back in business" after Super Typhoon Yutu's devastation and remains a "welcoming, beautiful, and a wonderful paradise for everyone."

The Marianas Visitors Authority sponsored the festival, with the support of Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands.

MVA also arranged for news media in South Korea, China, and Japan to cover the event and the Flame Tree Arts Festival.

Japanese Kenichi Ebina, the winner of *America's Got Talent* in 2013, served as the festival's finale performer.

Before Ebina, equally impressive were the performances of popular Chinese singer Yixin Wang, Korean singer Huh Gak, and South Korean boy band Ulala Session.

South Korean singer Gak Huh, extreme left, and members of South Korean boy band Ulala Session, from left to right, Seung-il Park, Myung-hoon Kim, Do-won Choe, and Jun-seok Ha, answer questions during a press conference at the festival grounds of the Flame Tree Festival and MyMarianas Paradise Festival at the Civic Center in Susupe Friday morning. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

An electrified crowd watched the performances at the MyMarianas Paradise Festival Saturday night. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Kenichi Ebina, winner of America's Got Talent in 2013, teaches the audience some dance moves during the MyMarianas Paradise Festival Saturday night. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Members of the Ulala Session are Myung-hoon Kim, Seung-il Park, Do-won Choe, and Jun-Seok Ha.

Just like Ebina, it was Yixin Wang's first time to visit Saipan.

Wang said she is thankful given the opportunity to connect with the Chinese people in the CNMI. She started singing when she was 9 years old.

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher A. Concepcion said they are very happy with the outcome of the festival. He said the crowd reaction was amazing.

"They cheered loudly, interacted with the celebrities, and gave them a very warm welcome to the CNMI," Concepcion said.

He noted that the international media coverage was also extensive, and the celebrities that they flew in enjoyed themselves.

"We want to thank Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Rob Hunter and Commonwealth Council of Arts and Culture director Parker Yobei and their team for supporting this event and for partnering with us," Concepcion said.

Chinese singer Yixin Wang prepares to perform for the MyMarianas Paradise Festival. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Kenichi Ebina, winner of *America's Got Talent* in 2013, attends a press conference Friday prior to his performance Saturday at the MyMarianas Paradise Festival. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher A. Concepcion and MVA staff pose in a group photo with Kenichi Ebina, winner of America's Got Talent in 2013, at the festival ground for MyMarianas Paradise Festival Friday morning. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Chinese singer Yixin Wang and her group join Marianas Visitors Authority's managing director Christopher A. Concepcion and some MVA employees after a press conference Friday morning. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher A. Concepcion and MVA China staff pose for a photo at the festival ground in Susupe. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Business

Growing number of states move to shield lottery winners

PHOENIX (AP)—A growing number of states are moving to allow the winners of big lottery jackpots to stay anonymous as privacy concerns are increasingly trumping lottery groups' wishes to publicize winners to boost sales and show that the games are fair.

Arizona could be the next state to join at least nine others with laws that let winners keep their names secret under a proposal headed to Republican Gov. Doug Ducey. Four years ago, just five states allowed anonymous winners, and a handful of others allowed trusts to claim prizes.

At least eight state legislatures considered measures shielding winners' names this year. Virginia's governor signed legislation allowing winners of $10 million or more to remain anonymous. Proposals in Arkansas and Connecticut failed, while efforts in Massachusetts, Minnesota and Oregon are still being considered.

New Mexico's governor last week axed a similar proposal, with a spokesman saying Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham decided to prioritize transparency.

The Arizona lottery headquarters is shown Friday, April 12, 2019 in Tempe, Ariz. AP

"To be sure, the governor is clear about the concerns raised by proponents, i.e., that certain bad actors could take advantage of lottery winners if their names are made public," spokesman Tripp Stelnicki said in a statement. But "New Mexicans should have every confidence in the games run by the lottery."

Arizona's governor hasn't weighed in on the proposal before him.

The Arizona Lottery took no official position, but spokesman John Gilliland said "it is important that we have that transparency, because the lottery is nothing without integrity."

"And the only way the public has an absolute guarantee of integrity as far as real people winning these prizes is to be able to know who wins these prizes," he said this week.

Republican state Rep. Nancy Barto introduced the measure, saying she wanted to protect winners from harassment. State Rep. John Kavanagh pushed for current law that shields winners' names for 90 days but said this week that it doesn't go far enough.

"After 90 days, the person is then subjected to all sorts of people hitting them up for loans, investment advisers trying to make them a client and the potential to be victimized by a burglar or, if it's a massive amount, having their kid kidnapped," the Republican said.

Balancing those concerns against the Lottery's interests in transparency isn't a close call, he said.

That's in line with a New Hampshire judge's decision last year to allow the winner of a nearly $560 million Powerball jackpot to stay anonymous. The woman signed the ticket before she realized that state law would let her create a trust to shield her identity. The judge noted that she could be harassed or solicited for money.

Trusts are allowed in at least two other states besides New Hampshire, while a policy from South Carolina's lottery board allows anonymity. The winner of a $1.5 billion ticket bought at a South Carolina convenience store last year remains unknown under that policy.

Lottery fraud is a concern. In 2017, a programmer for the Multi-State Lottery Association got up to 25 years in prison for rigging a computer program to enable him to pick winning numbers in games in Colorado, Wisconsin, Kansas, Iowa and Oklahoma between 2005 and 2011.

The executive director of the Iowa-based lottery association, which runs the Powerball game in 44 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, said he understands why some states are moving toward winner secrecy.

"However, the disclosure of winner names is one way lotteries are working to keep the process transparent," association Executive Director J. Bret Toyne said. "It shows the public that everyday people are randomly winning the prizes."

Trump wields presidential power on pipeline, energy projects

WASHINGTON (AP)—Eager to jump-start the stalled Keystone XL oil pipeline and other energy projects, President Donald Trump has acted to assert executive power over pipelines and such infrastructure.

He issued a new permit for Keystone XL and insisted this exercise of presidential authority was not subject to judicial review. Then he signed an executive order clarifying that the president alone has the power to grant permits for cross-border projects such as pipelines. A separate order makes it harder for states to block pipelines and other energy projects on the basis of environmental concerns.

Taken together, the actions amount to a broad assertion of power that reverses more than 50 years of precedent that delegated decision-making on energy projects to individual agencies.

Trump has shown a willingness to override his own agencies to accomplish his aims. His actions, if upheld by the courts, could consolidate power over energy projects at the White House, increasing the influence of the president's political advisers and potentially cutting out experts and career officials throughout the government.

"Too often badly needed energy infrastructure is being held back by special interest groups, entrenched bureaucracies and radical activists," Trump said Wednesday before signing the executive orders at an event in Texas.

Pipeline opponents say Trump acted illegally. They have asked a federal court to block the new Keystone permit, arguing that it is an effort to get around an earlier court ruling.

But one legal expert said Trump's approach might succeed.

"He has now created a whole new decision-making structure" for cross-border pipelines, said Richard Pierce, a law professor at George Washington University.

If the courts follow a 1992 Supreme Court ruling, they may find that action taken by the State Department in approving or rejecting the pipeline "is nonreviewable, because it doesn't qualify as final agency action," Pierce said. Further, Trump's decision would not be subject to review because of a separate law that declares the president is not an agency and therefore is not bound by rules that apply to agency actions.

"That's a very clever approach that might well work," Pierce said.

Trump's actions are "typical of this presidency," said Holly Doremus, an environmental law professor at the University of California, Berkeley. She said Trump frequently seeks to stretch the limits of his power, and she cited Trump's declaration of an emergency that he says allows him to shift more money to construction of a promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

In the case of Keystone, Trump appears to be arguing that the new presidential permit, issued March 29, gets around restrictions under the National Environmental Policy Act or other laws, because the statutes apply to executive-branch agencies but not to the president, Doremus said.

"If the president is the only discretionary decision maker, NEPA simply does not apply," she said.

While Trump's theory is plausible, it is unclear who is the ultimate decision-maker on Keystone XL, Doremus said. The pipeline would ship crude oil from the tar sands of western Canada to U.S. refineries along the Gulf of Mexico.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

House Democrat, treasury chief bicker over Trump tax returns

WASHINGTON (AP)—A top House Democrat on Saturday ratcheted up his demand for access to President Donald Trump's tax returns, telling the IRS that the law clearly gives Congress a right to them. The government's failure to respond by an April 23 deadline could send the dispute into federal court. Trump's treasury chief, who oversees the IRS, cited "complicated legal issues" and bemoaned "an arbitrary deadline" set by Congress, while saying he would answer in that time frame.

A new letter by Rep. Richard Neal, the House Ways and Means Committee chairman, comes after the Trump administration asked for more time to consider his initial request last week. Neal had requested six years of Trump's personal and business tax returns. Neal, D-Mass., argues that a 1920-era law saying the IRS "shall furnish" any tax return requested by Congress "is unambiguous and raises no complicated legal issues" and that the Treasury Department's objections lack merit. The letter to IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig is the latest exchange in a tug of war over Trump's returns, which would give lawmakers far greater insight into the president's business dealings and potential conflicts of interest as it exercises its oversight role.

Mazda recalls nearly 190K cars due to failing wipers

DETROIT (AP)—Mazda is recalling nearly 190,000 Mazda 3 compact cars in the U.S. because the windshield wipers can fail. The company says in documents posted Saturday by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that the recall covers cars from the 2016 through 2018 model years. The Japanese automaker traced the problem to metal deposits that can cause a wiper relay to stick, knocking out the wipers and limiting driver visibility. The company says it has no reports of crashes or injuries due to the problem. Dealers will replace the front wiper control module at no cost to owners starting June 3.

SeaWorld lays off undisclosed number of employees

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—SeaWorld has laid off an undisclosed number of employees around the country in a move its says is aimed toward improving efficiency. SeaWorld Entertainment spokeswoman Suzanne Pelisson-Beasley told the Orlando Sentinel on Saturday that the layoffs occurred Friday. She declined to say how many employees were let go or where or how much the company is saving. In addition to SeaWorld Orlando, the company has 11 parks around the country. The company reported 4,700 full-time and 12,000 part-time employees in latest stock filing. The company's leaders have said they are trying to save millions as it opens new attractions and rebounds from years of attendance struggles stemming in part from backlash created by the documentary "Blackfish," which alleged mistreatment of captive whales.

Nation

Trump sanctuary city idea could help migrants stay in US

PHOENIX (AP)—An idea floated by President Donald Trump to send immigrants from the border to "sanctuary cities" to exact revenge on Democratic foes could end up doing the migrants a favor by placing them in locations that make it easier to put down roots and stay in the country.

The plan would put thousands of immigrants in cities that are not only welcoming to them, but also more likely to rebuff federal officials carrying out deportation orders. Many of these locations have more resources to help immigrants make their legal cases to stay in the United States than smaller cities, with some of the nation's biggest immigration advocacy groups based in places like San Francisco, New York City and Chicago. The downside for the immigrants would be a high cost of living in the cities.

The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University announced this week that an analysis found that immigrants in sanctuary cities such as New York and Los Angeles are 20% less likely to be arrested out in the community than in cities without such policies.

"With immigrants being less likely to commit crimes than the U.S.-born population, and with sanctuary jurisdictions being safer and more productive than non-sanctuary jurisdictions, the data damns this proposal as a politically motivated stunt that seeks to play politics with peoples' lives," said George Gascon, district attorney for San Francisco.

Trump has grown increasingly frustrated over the situation at the border, where tens of thousands of immigrant families are crossing each month, many to claim asylum. His administration has attempted several efforts to stop the flow, and he recently shook up the top ranks of the Department of Homeland Security.

The idea to ship immigrants to Democratic strongholds was considered twice in recent months, but the White House and Department of Homeland Security said the plan had been rejected. But Trump said Friday he was still considering the idea.

"Due to the fact that Democrats are unwilling to change our very dangerous immigration laws, we are indeed, as reported, giving strong considerations to placing Illegal Immigrants in Sanctuary Cities only," Trump tweeted. He added that, "The Radical Left always seems to have an Open Borders, Open Arms policy - so this should make them very happy!"

Wilson Romero is an immigrant from Honduras who chose to settle in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Romero, 27, was separated from his daughter, now 7, by federal authorities at the U.S. border at El Paso, Texas, last year and jailed for three months before being released and making his way to live with his mother in San Jose, California. There he was reunited with his daughter, who attends public kindergarten.

Romero says he goes about daily errands in public without worry of discrimination. His daughter has made friends and has playdates with the children of Mexican American families. It's a far cry from his hometown in the violence-plagued outskirts of San Pedro Sula, Honduras, that he fled after his brother-in-law was killed.

To him, the biggest problem with being in the Bay Area is the high cost of living. The former textile factory worker relies on his mother's income from waitressing for food and clothing, and he's started thinking about asking legal permission to move to North Carolina, where an uncle resides and says it's cheaper to live and work.

"To tell the truth, it's a little tight now, financially speaking," said Romero, a former textile factory worker, who said he doesn't know of any charities that may be willing to help.

The plan discussed by Trump would also have financial, logistical and legal issues.

The transportation of immigrants who are arrested at the border to large and faraway cities would be burdensome and costly at a time when Immigration and Customs Enforcement is already stretched thin, having released over 125,000 immigrants into the country pending their immigration court since Dec. 21. They are currently being released mainly in border states.

AP

President Donald Trump participates in a roundtable on immigration and border security at the U.S. Border Patrol Calexico Station in Calexico, Calif., Friday April 5, 2019.

ACROSS THE NATION

Man punches attorney in head after being convicted of murder

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—A Tucson man just convicted of murder in the stabbing death of his girlfriend waited until jurors left the courtroom before turning and punching one of his defense lawyers in the side of the head. The Arizona Daily Star reports that sheriff's deputies then wrestled 28-year-old Chet Jack Wadsworth Maley to the floor as additional deputies ran into the courtroom Friday., When court resumed, Maley wasn't in the courtroom and paramedics arrived to tend to attorney Craig Kessler. The judge presiding over the case then granted a motion by another defense lawyer to allow public defenders to withdraw as Maley's counsel and appointed a contracted attorney to represent Maley in his May 13 sentencing in the killing of Roxanne Ortiz and in an assault case stemming from the courtroom attack.

Father suspected in house fire that killed 2 children dies

BIG LAKE, Minn. (AP)—Authorities say a man suspected of starting a house fire in Minnesota that killed two of his children has died. The Sherburne County Sheriff's Office says in a release that 36-year-old Anthony Robert Parker died Saturday of injuries suffered in the Friday morning blaze in Big Lake, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) from Minneapolis. The fire killed Parker's two toddlers, 1-year-old Spencer Parker and 2-year-old Landon Parker. His other children, who 7 and 9 years old, were injured. Their conditions have not been released. The state fire marshal's office is investigating the cause of the blaze.

Minnesota woman with 64 dead cats, 43 live cats sentenced

FARMINGTON, Minn. (AP)—A Minnesota woman who was found to have 64 dead cats, 43 live cats, a 400-pound pig and other animals on her property has been sentenced. Twenty-five-year-old Caycee Bregel, who ran an animal rescue nonprofit out of home south of the Twin Cities, pleaded guilty Friday to 13 counts of animal cruelty. Bregel was ordered to serve 200 hours of community service, two years of probation and 90 days of electronic home monitoring. She must also receive a psychological examination. Court documents say complaints about the pig running loose led investigators to the house. They found numerous cats and dogs in poor health and said the emitted an "overpowering smell of urine and feces." Dead cats were found in shallow graves across the backyard, in freezers and refrigerators, and in the garage.

2 children dead, many homes damaged as storms pummel South

DALLAS (AP)—Powerful storms that rolled across the South on Saturday spawned at least two suspected tornadoes, damaged homes and killed two children in Texas, authorities said.

The Angelina County Sheriff's Office said an 8-year-old and a 3-year-old died when strong winds toppled a tree onto the back of their family's car in Lufkin while it was in motion. Capt. Alton Lenderman said the parents, who were in the front seats, were not injured.

Lufkin is about 115 miles (185 kilometers) northeast of Houston. Additional information was not immediately available.

In Central Texas, Robertson County Sheriff Gerald Yezak told The Associated Press a tornado hit the small city of Franklin, overturning mobile homes and damaging other residences. Franklin is located about 125 miles (200 kilometers) south of Dallas.

The National Weather Service said preliminary information showed an EF-3 tornado touched down with winds of 140 mph (225.3 kph). Crews will continue to survey the damage over the next few days.

Two people were hospitalized for injuries not thought to be life-threatening, while others were treated at the scene for minor injuries, Yezak said. Some people had to be extricated from their homes.

Weather service meteorologist Monique Sellers said they've received reports of downed trees, as well as damage to buildings and a transmission tower.

The storms are part of a large system moving through the southern United States, knocking out power to thousands and causing some flash flooding. The weather service said the system is expected to shift to the Ohio Valley and the Southeast on Sunday. More than 140,000 customers remained without power in Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas late Saturday.

Meteorologist John Moore said a possible twister touched down Saturday in the Vicksburg, Mississippi, area. No injuries have been reported, but officials said several businesses and vehicles were damaged. Trees were down throughout the hilly city on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi.

Heavy rains and storms continued to rake the Magnolia State into the night, with Mississippi State University's 21,000 students huddling in basements and hallways as a tornado came near the school's campus in Starkville. University spokesman Sid Salter said some debris, possibly carried by the tornado, was found on campus, but no injuries were reported and no buildings were damaged. Trees were down and at least some minor structural damage was reported in residential areas east of the campus.

Winds of up to 60 mph (96.56 kph) were reported in Cherokee County, Texas, damaging two homes in Alto but not injuring anyone. Alto is situated about 140 miles (225 kilometers) north of Houston.

Asia

Kim open to another summit with Trump, with conditions

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said he is open to a third summit with President Donald Trump, but set the year's end as a deadline for Washington to offer mutually acceptable terms for an agreement to salvage the high-stakes nuclear diplomacy, the North's state-run media said Saturday.

Kim

Kim made the comments during a speech Friday at a session of North Korea's rubber stamp parliament, which made a slew of personnel changes that bolstered his diplomatic lineup amid stalemated negotiations with the United States. His speech came hours after Trump and visiting South Korean President Moon Jae-in met in Washington and agreed on the importance of nuclear talks with North Korea.

"We of course place importance on resolving problems through dialogue and negotiations. But U.S.-style dialogue of unilaterally pushing its demands doesn't fit us, and we have no interest in it," Kim said during the speech.

According to the Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, Kim blamed the collapse of his summit with Trump in February on what he described as unilateral demands by the United States, which he said raised questions over whether Washington has genuine willingness to improve relations. But Kim said his personal relationship with Trump remains good and that they could exchange letters at "any time."

Trump responded to the remarks by saying he agreed with Kim about their relationship, and also expressed a desire for another summit.

"I agree with Kim Jong Un of North Korea that our personal relationship remains very good, perhaps the term excellent would be even more accurate, and that a third Summit would be good in that we fully understand where we each stand," Trump wrote on Twitter.

"North Korea has tremendous potential for ... extraordinary growth, economic success and riches under the leadership of Chairman Kim. I look forward to the day, which could be soon, when Nuclear Weapons and Sanctions can be removed, and then watching North Korea become one of the most successful nations of the World!" he tweeted.

In his speech, Kim repeated earlier claims that North Korea's crippled economy would persevere through heavy international sanctions imposed over its nuclear weapons program and that he wouldn't "obsess over summitry with the United States out of thirst for sanctions relief."

The United States has said the summit in Vietnam broke down because of the North's excessive demands for sanctions relief in return for limited disarmament measures. In their first summit last June in Singapore, Trump and Kim issued a vague statement calling for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula without describing when or how it would occur.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Shooting at Australia nightclub leaves 1 dead, 1 critical

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—A drive-by shooting outside a popular Melbourne nightclub in Australia early Sunday left one man dead, another critically wounded and two others injured, police said. Police said shots were fired from a car into a crowd standing outside the two-story Love Machine club, hitting three security guards at the nightclub and one patron. Police appealed for anyone with video footage or information to come forward. They have made no arrests so far. Four people were taken to a hospital, two of whom in critical condition. Police later confirmed that one man, 37 years old, had died. They are investigating whether a black Porsche SUV seen leaving the area is related to the shooting. The car was later found burnt out.

"These things are still incredibly rare and there's nothing to indicate at the moment that this is part of a broader agenda," said Andrew Stamper of Victoria state police. Love Machine host Steve Yousif posted on Facebook: "Overwhelmed with all your calls and texts, nothing but love for you all."

Philippine troops kill 12 Abu Sayyaf militants in clashes

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine troops killed 12 Abu Sayyaf militants in clashes as they pressed an offensive in a southern province where the extremists have been blamed for the deadly bombing of a Roman Catholic cathedral, the military said Friday. The 12 militants were killed in four separate clashes Thursday in mountainous Patikul town in Sulu province. The bodies of two of the slain militants were retrieved and several army scout rangers were wounded, the military's Western Mindanao Command said. In the initial and largest clash, troops battled about 120 militants led by Hajan Sawadjaan and Radullan Sahiron near the village of Panglayahan. Four militants were killed and the rest withdrew and were chased by troops, military officials said. Among those killed was Julie Ikit, an aide of Sahiron, who is on the U.S. list of wanted terrorists for his involvement in past ransom kidnappings and terrorist attacks, Sulu's military spokesman Lt. Col. Gerald Monfort said.

Japan says US serviceman kills woman, self in Okinawa

TOKYO (AP)—A U.S. serviceman fatally stabbed a Japanese woman and then killed himself in Okinawa on Saturday, Japan's Foreign Ministry said, amid growing resentment about the presence of American troops in the southwestern Japanese region. U.S. Forces Japan said the Naval Criminal Investigative Service was working with local police to look into the deaths of a U.S. Navy sailor assigned to a Marine unit and an Okinawa resident. "This is an absolute tragedy and we are fully committed to supporting the investigation," it said in a statement, adding that more information would be released later. Japan's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Takeo Akiba telephoned U.S. Ambassador William Hagerty, asking for cooperation with the investigation and efforts to prevent a recurrence, and expressed "extreme regrets," the Foreign Ministry said. Although Okinawa makes up less than 1 percent of Japan's land space, it hosts about half of the 54,000 American troops stationed in Japan, and is home to 64 percent of the land used by the U.S. bases in the country under a bilateral security treaty.

World

UK pressured not to overlook Swedish claims versus Assange

LONDON (AP)—British lawmakers are heaping pressure on the government to make sure that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange faces Swedish justice if prosecutors there reopen a rape investigation against him.

AP

Julian Assange gestures as he arrives at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London, after the WikiLeaks founder was arrested by officers from the Metropolitan Police and taken into custody Thursday April 11, 2019.

There is mounting concern that Assange should not be allowed to sidestep the Swedish investigation stemming from his 2010 visit to Sweden. The complaints from two women eventually led him to seek refuge in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London rather than return to Sweden for questioning.

Some are calling for the British government to extradite Assange to Sweden, if it makes an official request, rather than to the U.S., which seeks him on conspiracy charges.

More than 70 British lawmakers signed a letter late Friday urging Home Secretary Sajid Javid to "do everything you can to champion action that will ensure Julian Assange can be extradited to Sweden in the event Sweden makes an extradition request."

Prominent Conservative Party lawmaker Alistair Burt, a former Foreign Office minister, said Saturday that it's "quite disturbing" to see the sexual allegations minimized.

He said the testimony of the two women makes it "essential" that Assange face justice, to either be cleared in a Swedish court or be convicted.

Assange, 47, has denied the sexual misconduct allegations, which he claims are politically motivated. He claims the sex was consensual.

Sweden suspended its investigation into possible sexual misconduct against Assange two years ago because he was beyond their reach while he was living in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London with political asylum status. Prosecutors said the investigation could be revived if his situation changed.

Assange was arrested Thursday after Ecuador withdrew his asylum. He is now in Belmarsh Prison in southeast London, waiting to be sentenced for jumping bail in Britain and facing an extradition request from the United States on charges of conspiring to break into a Pentagon computer.

WikiLeaks says Assange will fight the U.S. extradition request and has been meeting with his legal team to plan his defense.

He has not had a chance to enter a plea in response to the U.S. charge, but he says all of his WikiLeaks actions are those of a legitimate journalist.

Sudanese army holds 1st meeting with protesters since coup

CAIRO (AP)—Sudanese political parties and movements behind nearly four months of anti-government protests met with the country's military on Saturday, activists and the military said, holding the first talks since the army forced President Omar al-Bashir from power two days ago.

The meeting came after the protest movement scored two big victories this week, first ending al-Bashir's almost 30-year rule on Thursday and then forcing the interim military leader, Gen. Awad ibn Ouf, from his post a day later. Protesters viewed ibn Ouf as too close to the ousted leader.

The movement said it has formed a 10-member delegation to introduce "the people's demands" to the military council, reiterating its rejection of military rule.

Ali al-Sanhouri, the secretary general of the Arab Socialist Baath Party in Sudan, told a news conference in Khartoum that they are calling for the creation of a "civilian sovereignty council, cabinet and a national legislative association" to rule the county during the transition.

The protesters have said they will remain in the streets until a civilian transitional council is formed. They fear the military, which is dominated by al-Bashir loyalists, will rule indefinitely or hand power to one of its own.

Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, who was sworn in Friday to replace ibn Ouf as head of a transitional council formed by the military, said they have invited "all spectrums of Sudanese people for dialogue."

In remarks broadcast on state TV, he said the military council will rule the country for up to two years until elections.

Burhan said he was lifting the curfew imposed Thursday, which was to last for a month from 10 p.m.-4 a.m., and declared the immediate release of all those detained and tried during the current wave of unrest, which began in December.

Al-Bashir imposed a state of emergency in February, banning unauthorized public gatherings and granting sweeping powers to the police in efforts to quash the unrest. Hundreds of people were tried before emergency courts.

Burhan, who previously served as the general inspector of the armed forces, had met with the protesters in the streets after al-Bashir's ouster and listened to their demands.

Activists, however, said Saturday that 16 people, including a soldier, have been killed in the two days since al-Bashir's ouster.

The Sudan Doctors Committee, an affiliate of the Sudanese Professionals Association, which has been spearheading the protests, said 13 people were shot dead on Thursday and three others, including the soldier, were killed Friday.

Health & Wellness

This advertorial is sponsored by Tan Holdings HEALTH IS WEALTH Tan Siu Lin Foundation

These 14 fitness apps can help you get in shape, lose weight, stay fit and get free swag

By DALVIN BROWN
TNS

Are you too busy to work out?

There's an app for that. Need reminders to get moving? There's an app for that too. You want to work out with a trainer but can't afford one in real life? Odds are, you have digital fitness experts right at your fingertips.

Regardless of where you are in your workout journey and no matter how little time you have to exercise, the app store on your smartphone is home to thousands of apps that want to be your accountability partner.

Many of them are free to download. Other's offer in-app purchases to help you take things to the next level.

"A lot of these fitness apps are awesome because they let you train independently," said Schamgar Cenat, a 32-year-old certified personal trainer in New York City. "A lot of them are conducive to training at home, acting like your digital personal trainer, which makes them really appealing to a lot of people."

It's a booming business with 1 in 5 adults using fitness apps regularly, according to the market research company Statista. Another 15% use fitness apps occasionally, Stastista found.

Still, there are drawbacks and limitations.

"People need to know that if you don't know how to perform the movements before you get the app, you can get hurt," Cenat said.

"The apps offer general programs, but if you have any issues like a tight hip, for example, the app may not be able to offer the same regressions a personal trainer can."

Here are some of the best workout apps to start with, according to reviews on the Google Play and App store.

TOP FREE

Sweatcoin — This app motivates you to get moving by converting your outdoor steps into gadgets, services and experiences. Essentially, the fitter you get, the more stuff you get. It has 4.5 stars in the iOS store and over 65,000 ratings. Available here for iPhone and here for Android.

BetterMe — The weightloss workout version of this app helps you achieve your personal goals by building and modifying your meal and workout plans. You get assistance with setting goals and tips along the way toward accomplishing them. The app has a 4.4-star score based on almost 30,000 ratings. Available here for iPhone and here for Android.

30 Day Fitness Challenge — If you want to see a noticeable change in your body within a month, this app wants to help you get there. It includes fitness plans and exercises with HD video tutorials. Be sure to dedicate at least seven minutes a day. Available here for iPhone and here for Android.

Fitness Workout by GetFit — If you don't have a gym membership, that's fine. This app is designed to help you get the most out of the situation. Just chose a muscle group you'd like to improve, and you'll get access to in-house workout by fitness trainers, according to the company. Available here for iPhone and here for Android.

Nike Run Club — This app wants to be your running partner. It offers audio guided exercises, custom distance challenges and coaching plans to help you reach your goals. It has 4.8 stars from over 200,000 reviews on the Apple Store. Available here for iPhone and here for Android.

Fitbit — The company that has practically become synonymous with activity tracking has an app that you can use with or without a wearable. The sixth-highest rated health and fitness app in the iOS store can track basic activity on your smartphone, but connecting it with one of Fitbit's activity trackers releases a world of opportunities. Available here for iPhone and here for Android.

TOP PAID

Couch to 5K — As the name suggests, this app wants you to get off the couch and get running. You get a training plan and four different motivating virtual coaches. If you spend 20 to 30 minutes using the app three times a week, after nine weeks you could be ready to finish your first 5K, according to the company. Available for $2.99 on the App Store and Google Play store.

Full Fitness —This app not only provides instructions for hundreds of exercises but it sorts them by body region and the equipment needed to target specific muscles. It offers clear images of people doing every exercise with full-text instructions. With 4.4 stars in the App Store, it's clearly working for some people. The iOS-only app is available for $3.99.

Starting Strength Official — If you want easy to follow instructions for performing basic barbell exercises like squats, deadlifts, and bench press then this might be the app for you. It has a 4.7-star average review from over 1,000 Android users. Compatible with Android devices only, the app is available for $8.99.

Just 6 Weeks — If you have 10 free minutes at least three times a week, this app reportedly helps you get in shape in just a month in a half. It'll have you doing timed push-ups, sit-ups and planks. The PRO version is available on the App Store for $2.99 and it costs $1.99 on the Google Play Store.

iMuscle 2 — With this app, you can zoom into an area on a 3D human body, tap on a muscle and reveal targeted exercises and stretches. The company says it's ideal for fitness instructors and physiotherapists. Get it for $1.99 on the Google Play store. For iPhone users, it costs $4.99.

Home Workout MMA Spartan Pro — If you want to look like a modern-day Spartan, this app claims it can help. It's equipped with more than 40 workouts for all fitness levels and no equipment is required. It's $3.99 for iPhone and iPad and $3.49 for Androids.

What fitness app do you use? Let Dalvin Brown know on Twitter: @Dalvin_Brown

Study: Low-carb diet beats low-fat for weight loss and heart health

By LAUREN RAAB
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Good news for people who like oil more than bread: People on a low-carbohydrate diet lowered certain risk factors for cardiovascular disease and lost nearly three times as much weight as those on a low-fat diet, a new study found.

"This isn't a license to hit the butter and meat fats," cautioned Dr. Lydia Bazzano, a professor at the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and one of the study's lead authors. "But even very high-fat diets can be healthy."

The yearlong study, published this week in the Annals of Internal Medicine, found that total and "bad" (LDL) cholesterol levels—considered a primary risk factor for heart disease—went down equally for both groups, but "good cholesterol (HDL) went up quite a bit more on the low-carb diet than it did on the low-fat diet," Bazzano said.

At the end of the study period, participants in the low-carb group had lost nearly 12 pounds on average. Those in the low-fat group had lost 4 pounds on average.

The people in the low-carb group were told to have less than 40 grams of digestible carbohydrate per day, and those in the low-fat group were told to get less than 30 percent of their daily calories from fat (less than 7 percent from saturated fat) and 55 percent from carbohydrate.

Neither group got a limit for total caloric intake, and participants were told to keep getting as much or as little physical activity as was normal for them.

All participants got counseling sessions that Bazzano said covered topics such as planning meals, portion size, what to do at restaurants and how to read nutrition labels. It's unclear whether people who have similar diets but don't get such counseling would have similar results, the study noted.

Bazzano said participants were also educated about different kinds of fats. Monounsaturated fats (such as canola and olive oils) and polyunsaturated fats (found in foods such as nuts and fish) were "recommended," she said. Saturated fats—generally speaking, those that are solid at room temperature—were "not recommended."

The study isn't the last word on what kind of diet is best. An analysis published Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association looking at 48 studies involving overweight or obese participants found significant weight loss with any low-carbohydrate or low-fat diet.

Life & Style

For many 'Thrones' fans, season 8 is just the first ending

By ANDREW DALTON
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Devoted "Game of Thrones" fans who've watched and rewatched all 73 episodes of the HBO series, and read and reread all 4,000 pages of the books by George R.R. Martin, will at long last get the ending they've craved with the series' eighth and final season that starts Sunday (today in the CNMI).

But will it be the "real" ending?

The plotlines of the show have long since shot past what's in Martin's books, whose own finale may be many years away. While the endings will likely be similar, Martin, the master of this universe, could take a very different path to get there, making the coming end of the HBO show with its showdown between the humans of Westeros and the invading White Walkers possibly just a preview.

For some it all just means twice the fun.

This image released by HBO shows a scene from "Game of Thrones." The final season premieres today. AP

"It doesn't bother me. I don't think they need to be one and the same," said Adonis Voulgaris, a fan of both formats who lives in San Francisco. "For me, it just means more content I get to immerse myself in."

The show premiered in 2011, the same year Martin's fifth book in his "A Song of Fire and Ice" series was released. Fans have been waiting, and waiting, and waiting, for the sixth, "The Winds of Winter," ever since, and many wonder whether the 70-year-old author will live long enough to finish all seven planned books in the series.

"George is not a fast writer," said book-and-show devotee Andrew Stachler, 44, of South Pasadena, California. "So if you were following along, I think it was pretty evident early on that the show was going to get ahead of the books."

How not to break the bank on streaming services

By MAE ANDERSON and SARAH SKIDMORE SELL
AP BUSINESS WRITERS

NEW YORK (AP) — With more TV streaming services than ever before, from newcomers like Disney Plus to stalwarts like Netflix, consumers may feel the ideal viewing experience is finally at hand.

Americans have, on average, three streaming video subscription services, according to a recent study of digital media trends by Deloitte. While some have dropped cable and its average bill of around $100 a month altogether, about 43% have both pay TV and streaming subscriptions.

Yet patching together a variety of services to get just what one wants isn't always seamless. Families and individuals can still find themselves with service that doesn't perfectly suit their viewing habits. And those monthly subscriptions can add up fast.

"It doesn't make sense to pay for a bunch of content you have no interest in watching," said Bruce McClary, vice president of marketing for the National Foundation for Credit Counseling. "Finding a service that lets you scale your channel lineup based on your interests can also help you avoid paying for things you don't need."

A little research on which services are best for you can help save big bucks.

FOR FAMILIES

Disney is making the biggest play for family viewership. The owner of Disney Channel, the Star Wars franchise and most recently Fox's entertainment business is betting its mix of family-friendly franchises and beloved animated classics, along with original programming, will make the Disney Plus service irresistible to families, even if they already subscribe to other services. The service, launching Nov. 12, will cost $7 a month initially.

For some kids, there may be no substitute for watching Disney's "Frozen" over and over again. But other services that families might already subscribe to have a lot of family-friendly programming too. Amazon Prime ($119 per year or $13 per month for Prime loyalty program membership; Prime Video alone costs $9 a month), Hulu ($6 to $12 per month), and Netflix ($9 to $16 per month) all offer kids programming.

Another choice for parents: HBO Now ($15 a month) is the home for the classic kids TV show "Sesame Street." And for spendthrifts, YouTube's free Kids channel offers an endless stream of kid-friendly fare, although quality varies widely.

FOR MOVIE BUFFS

Movie fans will soon have to work a bit harder to find movies to stream. As Disney, Fox, Universal and Warner Brothers and others offer their own streaming services, they will all eventually pull their content from Netflix. But niche services are there to fill the void.

Classic movies can be difficult to find streaming. Movie fans suffered a loss when AT&T, which bought Time Warner last year, decided to discontinue FilmStruck, a streaming service that was a collaboration between Turner Classic Movies and the Criterion Collection. But a similar service called The Criterion Channel that offers 1,000 classic and contemporary films is stepping up to fill the void. It costs $11 a month or $99 for a year.

Other movie-centric streaming services include Fandor ($6 per month or $50 per year) or Mubi ($11 per month). Both offer a curated selection of movies.

Those on a budget can try Kanopy, a streaming service that works with public libraries and universities to offer library card holders streaming movies for free.

FOR SPORTS FANS

Sports fans do have streaming options, but they cost more since sports must be watched live. Basic live TV options are cheaper but may not include sports channels. Which service you choose depends on which sport or which team you want to watch.

There are a variety of live TV streaming services that offer a wide range of sports, but they've recently been raising their prices . Fubo TV offers more than 85 channels including ones that broadcast football, baseball, soccer and other sports. It costs $45 for the first month, then $55 a month after that. DirecTV Now costs $50 a month for the cheapest tier. Sling TV costs $25 to $40 a month. Hulu raised the price for its live-TV service in February, by $5, to $45. Sony's PlayStation Vue costs $45 to $80 a month. Google's YouTube TV is increasing its monthly fee to $50. It launched at $35 and has raised prices as it added more channels. Most of the live TV services offer the major sports channels such as Fox Sports and NBC Sports Network, as well as games broadcast on network TV. But ESPN, for example, is on Hulu Live and YouTube TV but not Fubo TV, so fans of a specific team or sport should examine the channel listings for each service.

There's no budget offering for watching high profile sporting events. But Disney's ESPN Plus costs $5 a month or $50 for the year. It offers some live games, including some hockey, soccer and baseball games, as well as content about sports like ESPN's "30 for 30" documentary series. But you can't watch most major league sports games on the service.

MIX AND MATCH

If you're a sports fan who also loves movies and has a family, you'll have to mix and match services while trying to stay within your budget. It is still possible to stay below the monthly cost of cable, says the NFCC's McClary.

"The acceptable threshold for spending is up to each household, but most 'live' and 'on demand' streaming services would be on the low end of the scale compared to traditional cable packages," he said. "One good measuring stick is to compare the monthly rate to your monthly content consumption patterns and what it would cost if you paid movie rental rates each time you watch a program."

Prince Harry, Meghan aim to keep baby arrival plans private

LONDON (AP)—Prince Harry and his pregnant wife Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, say they have decided to keep plans around their first baby's arrival private.

Kensington Palace officials said in a statement Thursday that Harry and Meghan "look forward" to sharing the news of their baby's birth once they have had a chance to celebrate privately as a new family.

The decision means that Harry and Meghan are not likely to pose for the world's photographers and TV crews on the hospital steps with their newborn, a break from the royal tradition followed by Prince William and his wife Kate, the duchess of Cambridge, when she gave birth to their three children.

As a future king, William is expected to help mark great occasions, while Harry—sixth in the line of succession—has more leeway. Both have in the past expressed deep misgivings about intrusive press coverage.

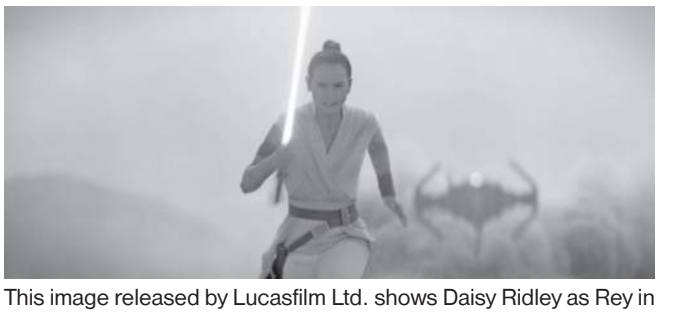
Harry and Meghan—an American actress best known for her work on "Suits"—wed in May in a spectacular, internationally televised ceremony at Windsor Castle.

They are expecting their first child in late April or early May. The palace press office has announced very few details about their plans, refusing to comment on unconfirmed British press reports that Meghan may opt for a home birth.

Harry and Meghan say they have not learned the gender of their baby.

The couple recently moved from central London to a more secluded house near their wedding venue.

New 'Star Wars' film promises 'The Rise of Skywalker'



This image released by Lucasfilm Ltd. shows Daisy Ridley as Rey in a scene from "Star Wars: Episode IX." AP

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

"No one is ever really gone," says the voice of Luke Skywalker in the first teaser trailer for "Star Wars: Episode IX," which audiences finally learned will be called "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" Friday at a fan event in Chicago.

The closely guarded film from director J.J. Abrams will put an end to the Skywalker saga that began over 40 years ago, but even as characters and actors have passed on, the footage shown at Star Wars Celebration suggests that as with all "Star Wars" films, death is just a technicality a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.

Mark Hamill's Skywalker may have died at the end of the most recent installment but his voice dominates the teaser trailer, telling someone, possibly Daisy Ridley's Rey, that, "this is your fight now." And audiences got a tantalizing tease from another figure from the past: Emperor Palpatine from the original and prequel trilogies, whose ominous laugh closes out the promotional spot.

Carrie Fisher's Leia Organa is back as well, despite the actress's untimely passing in Dec. 2016, thanks to unused footage from "The Force Awakens" which Abrams was able to craft into its own narrative for this new film.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

UK standup comedian Ian Cognito dies onstage during show

LONDON (AP)—British standup comedian Ian Cognito has died on stage during a gig. South Central Ambulance Service said medics were called to a club in Bicester, in southern England, on Thursday night, and "sadly one patient passed away at the scene." Police said the death was not suspicious. Show organizer Andrew Bird told the BBC that when the 60-year-old Cognito sat down and fell silent during his session, "everyone in the crowd, me included, thought he was joking." Cognito, whose real name was Paul Barbieri, never achieved wide fame but was highly respected among fellow comedians. Entertainer Jimmy Carr praised Cognito's kindness toward him when he was starting out in the business and tweeted, "He died with his boots on." "Little Britain" star Matt Lucas tweeted: "He was always kind to me when I started out, and brilliant and provocative and entirely original onstage. What a loss."

Mariah Carey to receive Icon Award at Billboard Music Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—No artist has more No. 1 hits on the Billboard Hot 100 chart than Mariah Carey, so it's only fitting that the singer will receive the Icon Award at the 2019 Billboard Music Awards. NBC and Dick Clark Productions announced Thursday that the Grammy-winning superstar will also perform at the May 1 event in Las Vegas. Carey has 18 No. 1 hits, including "Vision of Love," ''Hero," ''Honey" and "We Belong Together." Her duet with Boyz II Men, "One Sweet Day," spent 16 weeks at No. 1, making it the longest-running No. 1 hit on the Hot 100 chart. Luis Fonsi's "Despacito" tied the feat in 2017. Kelly Clarkson will host the Billboard Awards, and Panic at the Disco, Sam Smith and Normani will perform. Cardi B is the leader with 21 nominations.

Telegram announcing Abraham Lincoln's death is up for sale

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The handwritten notification of President Abraham Lincoln's death is being offered for sale by a Philadelphia documents dealer. Nathan Raab, president of the Raab Collection, says the telegram was thought to be lost, and calls it "truly one of our great finds."

It was written inside the home where Lincoln was rushed after being shot at Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and Thomas Eckert, the chief telegraph officer, stood watch over Lincoln, who died April 15. The telegram reads: "Abraham Lincoln died this morning at 22 minutes after seven." Stanton dictated the telegram to Eckert, who gave it to a runner to take to War Department telegraphers. The piece had been in the collection of a Civil War general's family for generations and is valued at $500,000. The 154th anniversary of Lincoln's assassination is Monday.

Wendy Williams files for divorce after 21-year marriage

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)—Wendy Williams has filed for divorce after nearly 22 years of marriage to her husband and manager. Her attorney, Mary Vidas, says the papers were filed in Essex County, New Jersey, where the talk show diva has a home. Vidas would not comment further on what she called "a private family matter." The 54-year-old Williams and 46-year-old Kevin Hunter have a 19-year-old son, Kevin Jr. A representative for the "The Wendy Williams Show" says that "Kevin is supportive of Wendy and they are working through this process together." Williams recently told her audience that she was "still very much in love" with her husband and that her wedding ring wasn't "going anywhere." She also disclosed last month she was living in a "sober house" because of addiction struggles.

German students have algorithm for Game of Thrones deaths

BERLIN (AP)—Spoiler alert: Computer science students at the Technical University of Munich have developed an application that scours the internet for data on the popular Game of Thrones series, and uses an algorithm to predict which characters are most likely to survive to the end of its final season. Project supervisor Guy Yachdav said Friday survival rates are predicted using longevity analysis similar to scientific studies used to examine the effects of medical treatments. He says although the analysis "relies on data taken from the world of fantasy, the exact same artificial intelligence techniques are used in the real world." The results ? Daenerys Targaryen has the highest chance of survival, at 99 percent, and Bronn is the most likely to die next. Only time will tell, but the series is notoriously unpredictable.

Girl not amused by 'SNL' joke about her disabled pet chicken

UNDERHILL, Vt. (AP)—A Vermont girl isn't happy that her disabled pet chicken was joked about on "Saturday Night Live." The chicken, named Granite Heart, is learning to walk with a custom wheelchair. On a recent 'SNL' episode, the television show's "Weekend Update" co-host said she should "just eat the chicken." Ten-year-old Alora Wood of Underhill, Vermont, tells NECN-TV that she knows the segment was meant to be a joke, but says what if it was a dog. The chicken was born with a deformed foot. The girl says: "Any creature, no matter how big, no matter how small, they deserve to have a perfect life." The custom wheelchair came from a company in Amherst, New Hampshire, that makes pet wheelchairs.

Assange arrest leads to interest in book of Vidal interviews

NEW YORK (AP)—The arrest of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has made a book of interviews with Gore Vidal an unexpected best-seller. Assange was carrying a copy of "Gore Vidal: History of the National Security State & Vidal on America" when he was arrested Thursday at the Ecuadoran embassy in London. By Friday afternoon, the 2014 publication was No. 35 on Amazon.com. "Gore Vidal" features conservations between the author-playwright and Paul Jay, founder of The Real News Network, a nonprofit with a stated mission of "independent, verifiable, fact-based journalism." Vidal, who died in 2012 at age 86, had a longtime aversion to U.S. military force and surveillance. Assange hadn't left the embassy since 2012 for fear of arrest and extradition to the U.S. for publishing thousands of classified military and diplomatic cables.

Nipsey Hussle's family gathers for private funeral in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Nipsey Hussle's family and friends gathered Friday for a private funeral on a day when the slain rapper was also honored by his hometown of Los Angeles. Hussle was buried at Forest Lawn-Hollywood Hills in an afternoon service. The sprawling cemetery in northern Los Angeles between Griffith Park and Burbank is, as the name would suggest, the final resting place of much Hollywood royalty, including Carrie Fisher, Debbie Reynolds, Bette Davis, Lucille Ball, Liberace and David Carradine. The small ceremony stood in contrast to a giant celebration a day earlier of the 33-year-old Hussle, whose real name was Ermias Asghedom. About 20,000 people flocked to a public memorial for Hussle a day earlier at Staples Center. Afterward, thousands more lined the streets as the recently anointed hometown hero, his casket draped in the flag of his father's native country, Eritrea in East Africa, embarked on a 25-mile tour of the city.

Study: Fox News is obsessed with Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

NEW YORK (AP)—Freshman Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's name is on the lips of nearly everyone at Fox News. A study found that the New York City Democrat was mentioned 3,181 times on Fox News Channel and its sister Fox Business Network during the six-week period of Feb. 25 to April 7, or just under 76 times a day. Not a day went by when she wasn't spoken about on Fox. The liberal watchdog Media Matters for America, which did the research, called it an obsession and said the first term representative has become the network's latest bogeyman, "someone for hosts and guests to demonize, knock down and refer to whenever grievances need to be aired against the Democratic Party." Media Matters for America did not analyze other news shows for this report. Its mission is to monitor conservative news in the U.S. media.

Johnny Depp's ex-wife asks judge to dismiss his lawsuit

FAIRFAX, Va. (AP)—Actress Amber Heard asked a judge Thursday to dismiss a $50 million defamation lawsuit her ex-husband Johnny Depp filed over an op-ed about domestic violence she wrote in The Washington Post, and provided new evidence toward her allegations of abuse. In the motion filed in the Circuit Court of Fairfax, Virginia, Heard describes in new detail more than a dozen instances before and during their marriage when she says Depp slapped her, shoved her, pulled her hair or choked her. Depp has denied any such abuse. The allegations have appeared in the couple's divorce and other legal fights. Heard includes exhibits such as photos of her with bruises on her face and scars on her arms, images of damage she says Depp did to their home, and newly revealed screenshots of text messages describing the incidents at the time, and excerpts of her divorce deposition describing domestic abuse. "Johnny Depp physically and verbally abused Amber Heard," her attorney Eric George said in a statement. "Since their divorce, Mr. Depp has continued to publically harass Ms. Heard, and attempted to gaslight the world by denying his abuse." Depp's lawyer said Friday that Heard's allegations are false and it was in fact she who was abusive to him."

Politics put a sudden end to 20-year-old friendship

DEAR ABBY: In the last presidential election, I had a friend who voted differently than I did. We didn't try to persuade each other to vote "our" way, but I did share on social media some opinions about people who had taken some controversial positions. She regarded these opinions as a personal attack and stepped out of my life without warning.

I have tried to re-engage with her several times—texts, Facebook messages, phone calls. One message was met with hostility, and the others have gone unanswered. I have tried to apologize for hurting her feelings even though I didn't intend to and asked for forgiveness. I have offered to take her to lunch.

I hate the idea of walking away from a 20-year friendship (we are both in our mid-30s, so this is a friendship that has lasted more than half our lives) over something that seems so insignificant to me. Do I quit? Do I keep trying?

MISSING MY FRIEND IN MICHIGAN

DEAR MISSING: What happened is unfortunate. Because not one of your overtures has been accepted, step back and stop trying for a while. After the next election, cooler heads may prevail, and she may be more receptive.

DEAR ABBY: I work as a secretary in a big law office. At the end of the year we are supposed to box up and summarize our closed files so they can be stored in our warehouse. For some reason, all the women in the office seem to think I should find a man to help me carry the boxes. All I'm doing is picking them up and putting them on a cart so I can take them to my desk.

Abby, I am more than capable of carrying a box that weighs anywhere from 20 to 50 pounds. I'm in my mid-30s, fairly active and have never had a problem with this. I have worked here for about three years, and it's always the same reaction. Today my supervisor made a big scene and insisted I find help.

I hate having to hear the same thing every year. I don't know why it bugs me, but it does. My feeling is if I can do it, why not? Should I just give in to their demands or stand my ground?

DOING MY JOB

DEAR DOING: Your supervisor may have told you to have a man place the boxes on the cart, I suspect, because of possible liability should you injure your back doing the lifting. Because ignoring the request could lead to "issues" with your employer, you should comply.

DEAR ABBY: I have recently been transferring all my photo slides from my childhood to my present age to my computer. Reviewing them I am dismayed there are very few photos of my grandfather, father or husband because they were usually the ones behind the camera taking the photos. Let's all remember to also put them in front of the camera so we may have many cherished memories of them, too.

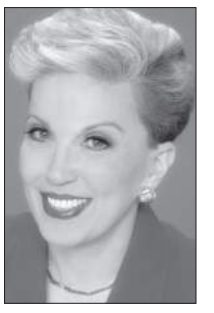
PICTURING IT IN OAKLAND, CALIF.

DEAR PICTURING IT: Your suggestion has merit, which is why I'm sharing it. However, with the advent of cellphone cameras and the ease with which folks take group selfies these days, I'm betting that in the future no one will be left out of the picture.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

HIC
HIC
HIC
(HIC) I HAVE (HIC) HAVE (HIC) I (HIC) I HAVE THE (HIC) THE (HIC)...
THE HIC (HIC) THE (HIC)
WHAT IS IT? WHAT DO YOU HAVE? A DOLLAR?? A NEW COMIC BOOK? WHAT??
THE (HIC HIC) I HAVE (HIC) HAVE THE (HIC) THE (HIC) THE HIC (HIC) THE (HIC)...
I LOVE DOING THIS.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@Home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

THERE'S NO WAY I'M GOING TO FINISH THE TAXES BEFORE THE MIDNIGHT FILING DEADLINE. WRITING THIS ANGRY LETTER TO THE I.R.S. IS TAKING TOO LONG.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Listening device
4 Iota
7 Bright star
11 Shapeless mass
13 Get older
14 Eden evictee
15 U2 lead singer
16 Sailor
17 Air outlet
18 Attempts
20 Judicial garb
22 Gaiety
24 "Weeping" tree
28 Macaroon ingredient
32 Wilderness Road pioneer
33 Unoriginal one
34 Actress Arthur
36 Hindu royal
37 Gold-loving king
39 Country named for an imaginary line
41 Eye, slangily
43 Tax form ID
44 One of the Fab Four
46 Cairo's nation
50 Hoosegow
53 Perched
55 Slithery
56 Shrek, for one
57 Part of TNT
58 Dance move
59 Pitch
60 Chatter
61 Wedding words

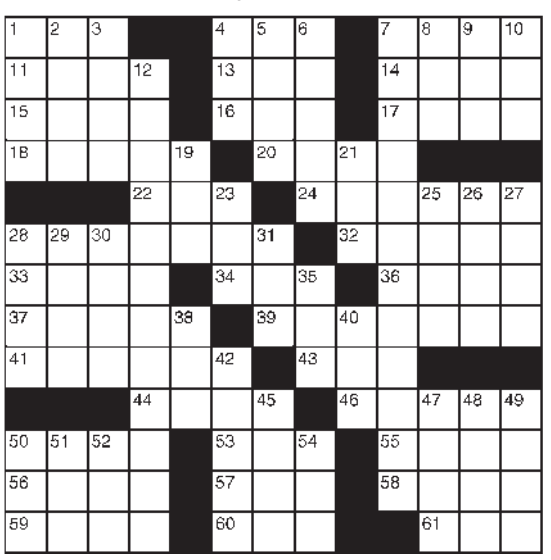
DOWN

1 Recedes
2 Oodles
3 Novelist Jaffe
4 Purse
5 Composer Stravinsky
6 Former quarterback Tim
7 Easy-to-peel citrus fruits
8 Poetic tribute
9 Moving day rental
10 Invoice fig.
12 Partake in a Hallowe en game
19 Day light?
21 Clothing protector
23 Gist
25 Burden
26 — account (never)
27 Dam
28 Bivouac
29 Mayberry moppet
30 Give up
31 Golf prop
35 Rm. coolers
38 Salty expanse
40 Exploit
42 Out of practice
45 Zhivago's love
47 Bigfoot's cousin
48 Begged
49 Printing error
50 Scribble (down)
51 Past
52 Apr. check casher
54 Gratuity

Solution time: 26 mins.

T	O	W	E	L	■	I	D	O	■	A	D	J
A	F	I	R	E	■	N	O	W	■	L	O	U
B	A	L	S	A	■	S	U	N	B	I	R	D
■	■	D	E	N	S	E	R	■	L	E	I	A
P	I	C	■	N	P	R	■	P	U	N	C	H
S	N	A	G	■	U	T	T	E	R	■	■	■
A	N	T	L	E	R	■	H	U	B	C	A	P
■	■	■	O	T	T	E	R	■	S	O	L	E
C	O	M	B	S	■	M	O	S	■	R	A	P
A	R	E	A	■	G	O	B	L	I	N	■	■
M	A	L	L	R	A	T	■	U	D	D	E	R
E	T	E	■	O	L	E	■	M	E	O	W	S
L	E	E	■	T	E	D	■	P	A	G	E	T

Last Friday's Answer 04-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Emma Watson, 29; Seth Rogen, 37; Cooper Barnes, 40; Emma Thompson, 60.

Happy Birthday: Rise above negativity. Look for opportunities, and make adjustments that promote what you want to achieve. A move that allows you to apply your skills in a unique way will give you a new lease on life. Spiritual and inner growth will offer insight into what's really important and help you set your priorities straight. Strive for perfection. Your numbers are 8, 19, 23, 27, 34, 38, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Don't hide from controversy when you should address issues head-on. Taking responsible action and keeping the peace will help you avoid being blamed for what other people do. A business meeting will lead to an unexpected offer. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You don't have to take no for an answer; move on to someone who is more compatible to get the response you want. Working in unison with the right person will pay off and bring you the satisfaction you desire. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Be resourceful. Check facts before you get involved in a joint venture or you make a purchase that is less than adequate. Put your energy into personal improvements and gains, not someone else's goals. Do your own thing. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Look at the possibilities, and start heading in a direction that makes you happy. Sitting on the sidelines or letting others control your destiny will not lead to the success and happiness you desire. Embrace challenges and aim to win. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Check your motives before you head into something that may not be in your best interest or the interest of the people you love. Consider alternatives, and discuss your choices with those affected by the decision you make. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Emotional, financial or medical issues will surface. How you handle situations will reflect who you are and what you are capable of doing. Set a high standard, and rise above anyone trying to get more for less. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Take everything into consideration when dealing with a domestic issue or a family member. Look for solutions, and offer them in a positive manner to avoid resistance. An honest approach will sideline complaints and negativity. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Get on board if there is something that interests you. The people you encounter and the information you receive will motivate you to start something new or to revisit a goal you have yet to accomplish. Love is on the rise. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Don't let someone confuse you. An emotional encounter will put you in a difficult position regarding a friendship. Do what's right, and be fully prepared to walk away from someone trying to meddle in your affairs. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Turn your idea into a reality. A financial gain is heading your way. Negotiate, invest and look at reasonable ways to cut costs so you can focus more on the endeavors you want to achieve. A past problem should not be revisited. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* You can help others, but don't take over or someone will end up taking advantage of you. Offer suggestions, but put your energy to better use by making positive changes at home and to your surroundings. Start a new project. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Your help will be appreciated, and the results you get will parlay into an interesting proposal. A change of plans will turn out to be advantageous regarding your professional goals. A favor will be granted or an old debt repaid. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are industrious, charming and proactive. You are outgoing and curious.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		6			2			
	8	7	3			1		
2	3			5			8	
	6			7	8			9
		5	2	9	1	4		
1			4	6			5	
	4			8			9	2
		8			6	3	4	
			9			5		

Difficulty Level ★ 4/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

4	6	1	8	5	2	3	7	9
2	9	3	4	7	6	1	5	8
7	8	5	9	1	3	2	6	4
1	7	6	2	9	5	4	8	3
3	4	2	7	6	8	9	1	5
9	5	8	1	3	4	7	2	6
5	3	7	6	4	1	8	9	2
8	1	4	5	2	9	6	3	7
6	2	9	3	8	7	5	4	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 4/15

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THE HEROES & HEROINES AROUND US Solution: 8 letters

C	S	C	I	D	E	M	E	D	A	L	C	E	F	L
E	H	S	H	B	E	Y	O	N	D	I	V	C	I	A
L	R	A	W	A	R	D	S	E	P	A	U	R	R	V
E	E	U	R	O	M	G	O	E	S	L	E	E	E	E
B	C	S	T	A	R	P	G	C	T	P	T	L	F	I
R	O	S	U	A	C	A	I	U	T	A	L	J	I	D
I	G	R	N	P	R	T	R	O	E	O	U	F	G	E
T	N	D	E	U	E	E	E	H	N	S	R	L	H	M
Y	I	D	O	N	O	R	T	R	T	K	Ⓑ	N	T	I
R	Z	C	R	O	N	O	H	I	S	Ⓞ	S	U	E	L
E	E	T	R	A	G	I	C	E	Ⓛ	O	E	R	R	I
V	D	E	S	F	E	E	W	Ⓓ	R	B	N	S	S	T
A	Y	T	I	U	N	E	G	N	I	O	S	E	T	A
R	S	L	F	A	I	R	Y	T	A	L	E	S	C	R
B	M	T	A	E	F	E	D	E	R	I	M	D	A	Y

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Acts, Admired, Awards, Beyond, Bold, Books, Bravery, Celebrity, Champion, Characters, Courage, Culture, Defeat, Doctor, Donor, Epic, Fairy Tales, Film, Fine, Firefighters, Grand, Honor, Ingenuity, Justice, Lead, Literature, Medal, Medics, Medieval, Military, Nurses, Peril, Recognized, Save, Sense, Story, Superhero, Theater, Tragic, Winner

Last Friday's Answer: Stunt Double

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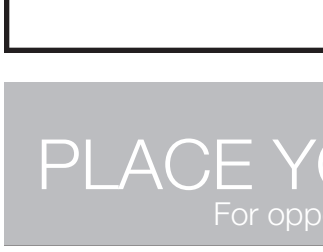

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPENING DATE: April 15, 2019 * CLOSING DATE: May 1, 2019: 10:00 A.M.

NMHC JVA No.	Positions:	Salary:
2019-003	Accounting Clerk	$19,272.74 to $22,302.94 - per annum Classified

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be picked up, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular working hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447/7689 or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net. NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

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Laborers must be willing to work outdoors. Prior experience in construction a plus but not required. The only requirements is consistent attendance, ability to follow directions, and a good attitude.

PUI has both day and night shifts available. Individuals who currently have day jobs are encouraged to apply for night shifts.

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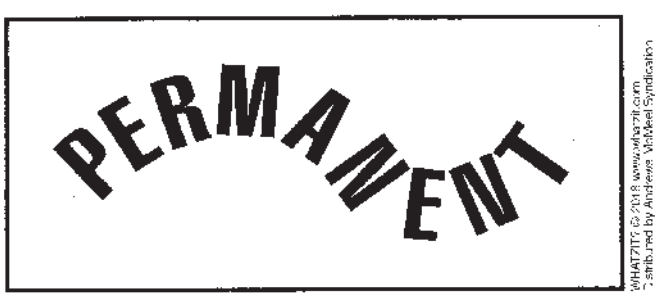

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Tiger and company set stage for epic Masters finale

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP)—Record scores on the white boards at Augusta National. Ground-shaking roars for Tiger Woods along the back nine.

Francesco Molinari blocked out the buzz on a delirious day of nine players sharing space atop the leaderboard Saturday. He emerged with another rock-solid round that looked spectacular only on his scorecard.

Molinari ran off four straight birdies on the back nine for a 6-under 66 that kept Woods and everyone else at a short arm's length going into a Sunday unlike any other at the Masters—an early start because of storms forecast for Sunday afternoon, with threesomes going off the first and 10th tees. The leaders were to tee off at 9:20 a.m.

That puts Woods in the final group at the Masters for the first time in 12 years, two shots behind.

Molinari played with Woods on the final day at Carnoustie last summer and outplayed the 14-time major champion amid a crowded leaderboard to win the British Open.

This is different.

AP

Tiger Woods hits from the gallery along the 11th fairway during the third round of the Masters golf tournament Saturday, April 13, 2019, at Augusta National in Augusta, Ga.

This is Augusta National, where the gallery that cheered louder with each birdie by Woods made it clear they were aching to see the four-time champion slip a green jacket over a red shirt for the first time since 2005.

"He obviously loves this place, and he's playing great golf," Molinari said. "So I'm aware that it's not going to be easy tomorrow and, like I said, I can just do my best."

Woods has not played in the final group at a major since he gave up a two-shot lead to Y.E. Yang at Hazeltine in the 2009 PGA Championship

He got there Saturday with three straight birdies on the front and finished with three birdies over his last six holes for a 67, his best score at the Masters since the final round in 2011.

Joining them will be Tony Finau, playing this year on two good ankles after a self-inflicted injury a year ago . He was part of a history-making Saturday as one of three players to shoot 64.

Molinari was at 13-under 203.

The Italian doesn't get excited easily, whether he's cradling a claret jug or going 5-0 in the Ryder Cup. His strategy doesn't change in any environment — try to hit the ball squarely, play smart, avoid bogeys. It's working so well that Molinari goes into the final round having gone 43 consecutive holes without a bogey.

"A lot of guys are playing great. I wish I only had to worry about him," Molinari said of Woods.

Another shot behind was Brooks Koepka, who has won three of the last six majors and had a 69 despite four bogeys.

Woods has won all 14 of his majors when he had at least a share of the lead going into the final round. He brings momentum to this major, having contended in the last two.

"It's been a while since I've been in contention here," Woods said. "But then again, the last two majors count for something. I've been in the mix with a chance to win major championships in the last two years, and so that helps."

Molinari knows what kind of atmosphere Woods brings to a major. Woods briefly took the lead at Carnoustie last year, but the Italian never flinched, playing bogey-free to capture his first major.

Augusta National might sound different than a tough links along the North Sea of Scotland.

This is where Woods first captured the attention of the sporting public when he set 20 records in winning the first of his four green jackets. This is the gallery that has longed to see him recapture the past, especially after four back surgeries that only two years ago left him hobbling up the stairs, wondering if he would play again.

Woods looked good as new this week, even for a 43-year-old who hasn't won a major in nearly 11 years.

"I'm just thankful to be able to come back here and play again," Woods said.

He joined the chasing pack on a day when going neutral meant losing ground. The 65 players combined to go 80-under par, at 70.77 the second-lowest scoring average in Masters history.

When he rolled in a 7-foot birdie putt on the par-3 16th, and the massive gallery rose to their feet with yet another ear-splitting roar, Woods became the ninth player who had at least a share of the lead Saturday. Molinari, playing in the final group, kept right on rolling.

"I hit the ball a little less well than yesterday," Molinari said. "But I holed some really good putts at 4 and 5 to save par. I can only be happy about today. It will be an exciting day tomorrow."

No one figures to be as excited as Finau, who turned his ankle celebrating a hole-in-one in the par 3 contest last year. He still managed to tie for 10th in his first Masters.

He nearly holed a 4-iron on the par-5 eighth Saturday on his way to a record-tying 30 on the front nine.

Because of the change in starting times, Finau gets to play alongside Woods—his golfing hero.

"As a kid, I always wanted to compete against him and have the opportunity to ... you know, I've dreamed of playing in the final group with him in a major championship."

Webb Simpson, who also shot 64, joined Ian Poulter (68) at 9-under 207, four shots behind and very much in the picture. The group another shot back included Dustin Johnson, who only made birdies on the par 5s and bogeyed his last hole for a 70.

The crowd favors Woods. The performance over the last year favors Molinari, whose British Open title is among four big tournaments he has won since last year's Masters. Molinari sees it another way.

"The favorite is probably the golf course out there waiting for us," he said.

After trading Beckham, Giants made sure Shepard stays

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — After shipping superstar wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. to the Cleveland Browns in a stunning trade, the New York Giants made sure Eli Manning had his second-favorite target locked up for years to come.

The Giants on Friday signed Sterling Shepard to a four-year contract extension that will pay him roughly $41 million.

"I'm just excited," Shepard said. "An opportunity to be in such a great place for another five years, it's a blessing. I'm looking forward to this opportunity. I'm not going to put so much weight on my shoulders. I'm just going to attack every day like I have been."

The signing comes a month after general manager Dave Gettleman stunned many by trading Beckham to the Browns for the No. 17 pick in this month's draft, safety Jabrill Peppers and a third-round pick.

A second-round draft pick in 2016, Shepard has 190 catches for 2,286 yards and 14 touchdowns in three seasons. He has been durable, missing five games in 2017. He finished third on the team with career-high totals of 66 catches for 872 yards and four touchdowns last season.

The trade has made Shepard the focal point of a receiving group that added veteran Golden Tate in free agency and has a group of veteran role players. New York (5-11) may look to add a down-the-field receiver in the draft, since Shepard and Tate are primarily slot players.

"We have no shortage of talent," Shepard said. "Those guys are ballers and they can get the job done. When they're put in that position, they're always going to execute. I have all the trust in those guys. I feel we're going to pick up right where we left off. The last five games were the best games we played in the season. We just have to fine-tune some little things. Once we do that, we'll be fine."

Shepard blossomed over the past two seasons as Beckham missed most of the '17 season with a broken ankle and the final four games last season with a quad problem.

"With Odell going down the last two seasons that time definitely helped me get a grasp of what being a leader is all about, and being that lead guy in the room," the 25-year-old Shepard said. "I think it prepared me for this moment. I was pretty vocal anyway. I'm a pretty vocal guy. That will be no problem."

Meanwhile, in Minneapolis, the Minnesota Vikings and wide receiver Adam Thielen have agreed in principle to a four-year contract extension valued at $64 million.

The Vikings announced the deal on Friday. Thielen's agency, The Institute for Athletes, posted the terms on Instagram , including the potential through incentives to earn as much as $73 million over the life of the contract covering the 2021-24 seasons.

Thielen has two years left on the deal he signed in 2017, which easily made the Minnesota native one of the best bargains in the NFL after averaging 102 catches and 1,325 yards over the past two seasons. He was picked for the Pro Bowl both years, further enhancing one of the league's best underdog stories.

He needed a pay-your-own-way regional NFL combine and a Vikings rookie tryout camp to make the practice squad in 2013 out of Minnesota State, an NCAA Division II school that offered him a mere $500 scholarship out of Detroit Lakes High School.

Russell leads Nets to Game 1 stunner over 76ers

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — D'Angelo Russell rang up a scoring burst that helped Brooklyn dial up an upset and filled Philly's home court with a barrage of boos.

All-Star Ben Simmons wants to put the fans on mute—and the Sixers could stand to silence their cellphones.

"If you're going to boo, then stay on that side," Simmons said.

Russell flashed some postseason magic, playing like the All-Star leader Brooklyn needed with 26 points, and Caris LeVert scored 23 to lead the Nets to an impressive 111-102 win Saturday over the 76ers in Game 1 of their Eastern Conference first-round playoff series.

"We've got the right pieces to keep it going," Russell said.

Check out this update on a mobile device: A Nets team that got hot late just to make the playoffs has the upper hand on the road over a 51-win team stocked with stars.

"I think earlier in the season, especially when we were struggling, we'd lose games like that," coach Kenny Atkinson said.

Not in April.

Russell, LeVert and Spencer Dinwiddie gave the Sixers fits off the dribble, buried open looks from 3-point range (11 of 26) and smoked a Sixers team that resembled one straight out of the early Process era.

Russell got the first win of his playoff career and the last laugh, scoring 14 points in the third quarter and leading the Nets to one of the biggest wins since they moved to Brooklyn. It came days after Los Angeles Lakers executive Magic Johnson, who dumped Russell on the Nets, resigned. Russell, who scored 19 points in the second half, can safely scroll through his phone to see his Nets are trending.

The 76ers might want to keep their phones on lock.

Sixers benchwarmer Amir Johnson was caught by TV cameras sitting on the bench and scrolling through his phone late in the fourth quarter and the Sixers down big. Johnson showed All-Star Joel Embiid whatever message was on the phone and then slid it into his warmup pants pocket.

AP

Brooklyn Nets' D'Angelo Russell, left, goes up for the shot as he gets past Philadelphia 76ers' Joel Embiid during the second half in Game 1 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series, Saturday, April 13, 2019, in Philadelphia.

Spurs 101, Nuggets 96

In Denver, Nikola Jokic overcame suffocating double teams to become the fourth player in NBA history to record a triple-double in his playoff debut and the first since LeBron James in 2006.

What did it mean to him?

"To be honest, nothing," Jokic said.

It also mattered little to the San Antonio Spurs, who beat the Denver Nuggets in Game 1 of their Western Conference playoff series.

Jokic's accomplishment was rendered a footnote by LaMarcus Aldridge's suffocating defense, DeMar DeRozen's 18 points, Derrick White's clinching steal in the closing seconds and all those wide-open shots that just didn't fall for Denver.

Although Jokic pulled down 14 rebounds and dished out 14 assists, he took just nine shots, made four, and was limited to 10 points, less than half his regular season scoring average of 20.1.

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich called it a wash because Aldridge wasn't himself, either, going just 6 of 19 for 15 points.

"We didn't let Jokic play as he wanted and they didn't let LaMarcus play as much as he wanted," Popovich said. "It is important because they are both great players and they are going to continue to get a lot of attention throughout the series."

Magic 104, Raptors 101

In Toronto, for the Orlando Magic, the first game of the playoffs felt a lot like the final few weeks of the regular season: high stakes, small margins, and a big win at the end of the day.

D.J. Augustin scored 25 points, including the tiebreaking 3-pointer with 3.5 seconds left, and the Magic beat the Toronto Raptors in Game 1 of their Eastern Conference first-round series .

Kawhi Leonard got a final shot for Toronto, but missed the rim with his 3-pointer from the top.

Orlando went 22-9 over the final 31 games of the season to clinch its first playoff berth since 2012.

"I think it helps," Magic coach Steve Clifford said of his team's tough regular-season finish. "We've been playing games that we had to win and were meaningful games for a while."

Nikola Vucevic, who scored 11 points, said Orlando's stretch drive help the team's mental preparation for the grind of the postseason.

"Throughout this last month, we were able to fight through a lot of different adversity and it has kind of prepared us for the playoffs," Vucevic said.

And, when crunch time arrived in Game 1, Orlando was entirely unfazed.

"We made a bunch of big plays in the last three or four minutes," Clifford said.

Warriors 121, Clippers 104

In Oakland, Steve Kerr preached to the Golden State Warriors to not "take the bait."

The bait being Patrick Beverley.

Stephen Curry scored 38 points and made eight 3-pointers to give him the most in postseason history, and the top-seeded Golden State Warriors began their quest for a three-peat by running away from the frustrated Los Angeles Clippers for a 121-104 victory in their playoff opener Saturday on a night tempers flared.

Kevin Durant and Beverley were ejected with 4:41 to go, just 19 seconds after they received double-technicals when Durant stripped Beverley and the Clippers guard fell into the scorer's table. They both became enraged again and official Ed Malloy immediately sent them both to the locker room. Durant high-fived fans as he exited and the home crowd went into chants of "Beat L.A.!"

Durant said Beverley has a "different type of grit" coming from Chicago.

"You know what he's going to bring to the table, just the physicality, mucking up the game a little bit with his physicality, his talking, everything. That's what he brings to each team he plays on. That's his identity," Durant said. "For me, I know that coming into the series. I thought it was fun tonight."

Like Durant, Beverley said he had fun.

"I got pushed, I got up and I got ejected. I guess the refs, I guess he saw something that I don't know," he said. "But that's all right. I give them a lot of credit."

Perhaps this old, heated rivalry still has all the testiness of years past — just with new faces all around.

"Pat's going to talk, and that's legal," Clippers coach Doc Rivers said.

Curry shot 8 for 12 from deep to pass Ray Allen (385) for career postseason 3s with 386, had a postseason career-high 15 rebounds, seven assists and the 31st 30-point postseason performance of his career.

Walton reaches agreement to be Kings coach

Luke Walton will become coach of the Sacramento Kings, securing another NBA head coaching job just a day after parting ways with the Los Angeles Lakers following three losing seasons.

The 39-year-old Walton was dismissed by the Lakers on Friday after Los Angeles went 37-45. His move to the Kings was confirmed to The Associated Press on Saturday by a person who spoke on condition of anonymity because it hadn't been finalized. A formal announcement from the Kings is expected in the next couple of days.

Sacramento general manager Vlade Divac fired Dave Joerger on Thursday after the coach helped develop the young Kings into playoff contenders before ultimately falling short in the franchise's 13th straight losing season.

Also Thursday, the Kings extended Divac's contract through the 2022-23 season— and Walton's deal is expected to run those same four years.

Sacramento features several talented young players acquired by Divac: guards De'Aaron Fox and Buddy Hield, forward Marvin Bagley III and center Willie Cauley-Stein. The Kings finished 39-43, nine games out of a playoff spot after being tied for the Western Conference's eighth seed heading into the final game before the All-Star break.

Sacramento had its most wins since going 44-38 in 2005-06 during coach Rick Adelman's final season. That ended a run of eight straight playoff berths and Sacramento hasn't been back to the postseason since for the NBA's longest active drought.

Walton, a former Lakers forward, went 98-148 after getting his first permanent head coaching job with the 16-time NBA champions. The former Golden State top assistant never led the Lakers to the playoffs, not even after the arrival of LeBron James last summer.

He certainly has coached some of the game's biggest stars and egos.

Many considered him the unofficial Coach of the Year for his guidance of the then-champion Warriors at the start of the 2015-16 season in place of an ailing Steve Kerr. Golden State began with a record 24-0 start and Walton was 39-4 overall before Kerr returned to the bench following complications from a pair of back surgeries.

Walton's departure came three days after the Lakers finished with a loss Tuesday to the Trail Blazers and the abrupt resignation of team president Magic Johnson

Sabathia returns, helps Yanks top White Sox

NEW YORK (AP)— CC Sabathia performed a big league first Saturday: consecutive regular season starts of at least five innings, no walks and no more than one hit.

Among Sabathia's more remarkable feats, considering what came between.

"That is classic CC right there," said Yankees manager Aaron Boone.

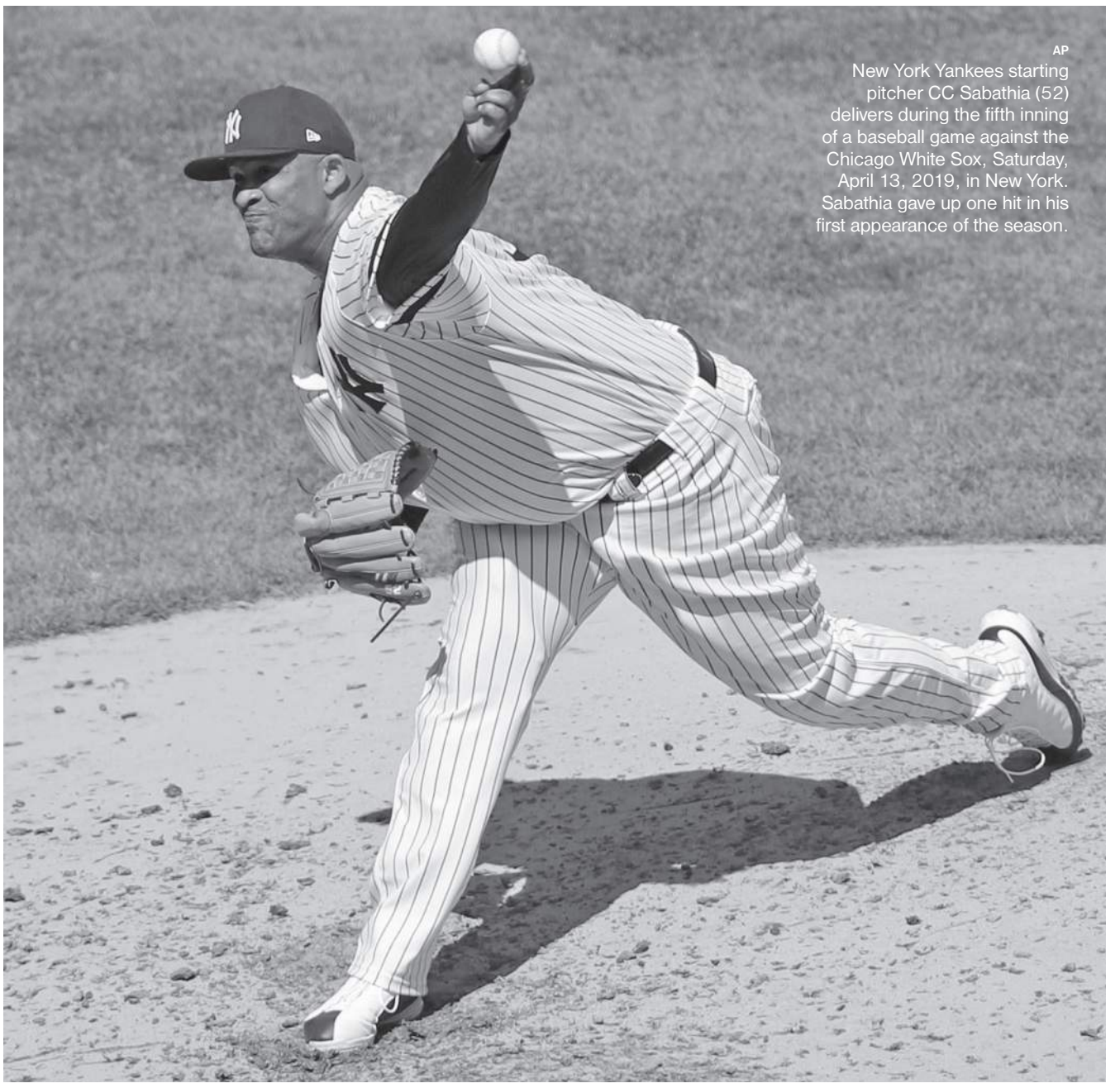
Sabathia began his 19th and final big league season with five stellar innings, pinch-hitter Luke Voit came through with a broken-bat RBI single in the seventh and New York one-hit the Chicago White Sox 4-0 Saturday to end a four-game slide.

Sabathia allowed a hit and no other baserunners in his first start since having a stent inserted after blockage was found in an artery from his heart in December. He's the first pitcher ever with five innings, one hit and no walks over back-to-back starts, per the Elias Sports Bureau, although it didn't feel quite as smooth as it looked.

"I was out there the first inning, I was like, shaking," said Sabathia, who plans to retire after the season. "Thinking from where I came from in December and actually being back on the mound, it's cool. I was able to kind of harness those nerves."

Johnny Vander Meer pitched back-to-back no-hitters for Cincinnati in 1938, walking a total of 11 in those two games.

José Rondón had Chicago's only hit, a clean single in the third inning.



AP
New York Yankees starting pitcher CC Sabathia (52) delivers during the fifth inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox, Saturday, April 13, 2019, in New York. Sabathia gave up one hit in his first appearance of the season.

Orioles 9, Red Sox

In Boston, Chris Davis ended his record slump at 0 for 54 and drew applause from rival fans at Fenway Park, getting three hits and driving in four runs as the Baltimore Orioles beat the Red Sox to end a four-game losing streak.

Davis walked to the plate in the first inning to what mostly appeared to be mock cheers when he was announced. But many of those quickly changed when he lined a bases-loaded, two-run single over the head of second baseman Dustin Pedroia, ending the longest hitless streak ever by a position player. Once he safely reached first, Davis tipped his cap to the Orioles dugout and many of his teammates raised their arms and hollered in support. He smiled and made a motion that he wanted to ball, which he got.

Astros 3, Mariners 1

In Seattle, Jose Altuve homered for the fifth straight game, Justin Verlander (2-0) struck out eight of the first 10 batters he faced and finished with a season-high 11, and the Houston Astros won their eighth straight.

Altuve homered for the sixth time in the past five games with a solo shot off Seattle starter Felix Hernandez (1-1) in the fifth inning. Altuve is the first Astros hitter to homer in five straight games since Morgan Ensberg set a franchise record with six straight in 2006. Robinson Chirinos also homered as Houston handed Seattle consecutive losses for the first time this season.

Angels 6, Cubs 5

In Chicago, Zack Cozart broke out of a slump with three hits and Cody Allen wiggled out of a jam in the ninth inning, helping Los Angeles win for the seventh time in its last eight games.

Ty Buttrey (1-0) earned his first major league win in his 23rd appearance, and Tommy La Stella reached four times against his former team. Allen struck out Daniel Descalso with two runners on in the eighth, and then closed it out for his fourth save.

Cozart went 1 for 33 in his first 13 games this season. But he hit an RBI single in Los Angeles' three-run second and singled again in the fourth and eighth.

Twins 4, Tigers 3

In Minneapolis, Michael Pineda labored through six innings, Eddie Rosario drove in two runs and the Twins edged the Detroit Tigers. Byron Buxton and Jorge Polanco added RBI singles for Minnesota.

Christin Stewart homered for Detroit, which has lost three of four.

In his third start, and longest outing of the season, Pineda (2-0) allowed three earned runs and eight hits, striking out five on a 37-degree day. The big righty, who had Tommy John surgery in July 2017 and did not play in 2018, has 15 strikeouts in 15 innings this season.

Giants 5, Rockies 2

In San Francisco, Madison Bumgarner pitched into the eighth inning to give a weary bullpen much needed rest and the Giants beat Colorado to hand the Rockies their eighth straight loss.

After outlasting the Rockies 3-2 in an 18-inning game that took over 5 ½ hours and ended shortly before 1 a.m., the Giants came back about 12 hours later and wrapped up this win in 2 hours, 48 minutes.

Blue Jays 3, Rays 1

In Toronto, Lourdes Gurriel Jr. hit a two-run double in the seventh inning to help the Blue Jays overcome reigning AL Cy Young winner Blake Snell's no-hit bid in a win over Tampa Bay, snapping the Rays' five-game winning streak.

Snell didn't allow a hit until Luke Maile singled with one out in the sixth.

With two runners on base and one out in the seventh inning, Gurriel Jr. drove a pitch from reliever Chaz Roe (0-2) off the center-field wall, giving the Blue Jays their first lead of the series.

Nationals 3, Pirates 2

In Washington, Adam Eaton and Howie Kendrick homered on consecutive pitches in the eighth inning and the Nationals rallied past the Pittsburgh Pirates.

After Richard Rodriguez (0-1) retired the first two batters in the eighth, Eaton tied it with his first home run of the season. Kendrick then connected for his second.

Anthony Rendon doubled to break a Nationals record with at least one-extra base hit in 10 straight games. He had shared the mark with Ryan Zimmerman.

Marlins 10, Phillies 3

In Miami, Newcomer Austin Dean had four hits and five RBIs, both career highs, to help the Marlins break a five-game losing streak.

Dean hit his first major league homer and also drove in two runs with his first career triple to complete a 4-for-4 night. The performance came in the outfielder's second game since being recalled from Triple-A to make his season debut with the Marlins.

Reds 5, Cardinals 2

In Monterrey, Derek Dietrich hit a tiebreaking homer off Adam Wainwright in the seventh inning and added a two-run triple as Cincinnati Reds won its fourth straight game, beating St. Louis in the raucous Estadio de Beisbol de Monterrey.

The start of the two-game series marked the first time either team had played in the regular season in Mexico.

Royals 3, Indians 0

In Kansas City, Homer Bailey (1-1) pitched seven innings of two-hit ball and the Royals won their second straight after a 10-game skid.

Ian Kennedy pitched a perfect eighth and Willy Peralta followed in the ninth for his first save to complete the two-hitter. Ryan O'Hearn homered, and Whit Merrifield and Adalberto Mondesi each had an RBI single for the Royals.

Jefry Rodriguez (0-1) gave up two runs and five hits over 5 2/3 innings in his first start with Cleveland.

Braves 11, Mets 7

In Atlanta, Freddie Freeman hit a go-ahead RBI single in the second inning, Ronald Acuña Jr. had his fifth straight multihit game and the Braves snapped the New York Mets' three-game winning streak.

Dansby Swanson drove in three runs, while Acuña, Nick Markakis and Johan Camargo each added two RBIs. Josh Donaldson went 2 for 3 and hit his first homer with the Braves in the seventh.

Touki Toussaint (1-0), recalled from Triple-A Gwinnett earlier in the day, earned the win with six strong innings of relief of starter Sean Newcomb, who last just 1 1/3 innings. Toussaint allowed four hits, one unearned run and two walks with seven strikeouts.

Padres 5, Diamondbacks 4

In Phoenix, Fernando Tatis Jr. hit a two-run homer and Franmil Reyes had a tiebreaking solo shot to lift San Diego to its fourth straight win.

Tatis' two-run homer, the rookie shortstop's fourth of the season, off Merrill Kelly gave the Padres a 4-0 lead in the third inning. Reyes' go-ahead shot in the seventh pushed the Padres to the win after Arizona tied it with four runs in the sixth.

Craig Stammen (2-0) got the final two outs of the sixth inning for the victory. Kirby Yates gave up a leadoff double to Ketel Marte in the ninth inning before striking out the next three for his major league-leading ninth save. Matt Andriese (2-1) took the loss.

Brewers 4, Dodgers 1

In Los Angeles, Mike Moustakas and Orlando Arcia homered, and the Milwaukee Brewers sent the Dodgers to their sixth straight loss.

The Dodgers didn't have a hit after Alex Verdugo's leadoff single in the fifth inning. Brewers pitchers retired the final 14 batters. Milwaukee turned three double plays behind Zach Davies (2-0), who allowed one run and eight hits in seven innings, struck out six and walked none. Junior Guerra earned his first save.

Cody Bellinger hit his NL-leading ninth homer on his bobblehead night. The Dodgers' 33 homers top the NL.

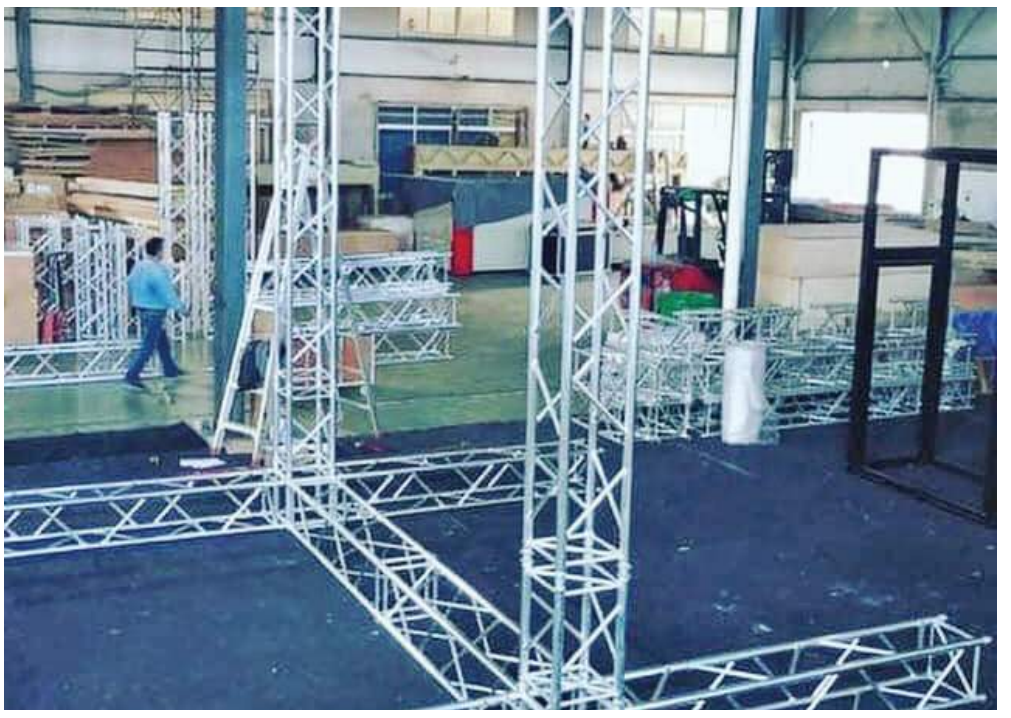
Caleb Ferguson (1-1) started in a bullpen game for the Dodgers, and allowed one run and four hits in 2 2/3 innings.

KONQER Apocalypse rescheduled to May 25

Saipan's KONQER Apocalypse Obstacle Course Challenge has been rescheduled from April 27 to May 25, according to KONQER president Kelli Wedd and MVA managing director Chris Concepcion.

"With so many community events taking place in April and May, and with some logistical issues we unexpectedly encountered recently, we are very happy to be able to move KONQER Saipan to May 25," said Concepcion.

"This gives the organizers more time to prepare and teams and individuals more time to register. This will definitely be a great event with it falling on Memorial Day weekend, too. We are very excited for the third annual KONQER Saipan to take place next month," he added.



KONQER FACEBOOK PAGE

The KONQER factory is busy finishing up builds for this year's all-new course and obstacles. The KONQER Apocalypse Tour kicks off in Saipan on May 25 and features massive "boss" obstacles.

Registration is available for as low as $25 per person, 18 and older (event only) and free for age 17 and under at konqersports.com. Non-business team registration is also available on the KONQER website, and business teams can be coordinated directly by emailing support@konqersports.com. KONQER Saipan will start at 9am.

"Now that we are on our 10th event overall, we've learned that while delays are never ideal, it's always best to hold KONQER when it's in the best interest of the community," said Wedd.

"We hope everyone understands the decision to push back the date for K10, and we'd like to extend our sincere appreciation to the local agencies and partners who have shown us such kindness and cooperation," she said.

Revised course information will be released soon, so event organizers encourage everyone to stay tuned to the KONQER website and Facebook page for the latest updates.

KONQER Saipan is presented by the MVA and sponsored by Bank of Guam, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, IT&E, American President Lines, Coors Light, *Marianas Variety*, Roil Soil, Saipan Brewing Company, Tribe Marianas, Paradise Awnings, DR LLC, Vantage Advertising, GoPro, and TriVision Media Group. ***(PR)***

CAMACHO

From Page 28

on his game, as he and the rest of the Pacific Games-bound team get ready for the Pacific Games in July. He added that he could have recorded a better gross score if not for fatigue, as he worked since 6:30am in the morning and then after his shift, he quickly joined the tournament that started at 12:30pm.

"We will continue our regular practice and push ourselves harder, as the Pacific Games gets closer," said the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort pro instructor.

Camacho won $500 and got an extra $200 for his closest to the pin shot on No. 15.

Tenorio went home with $500, too for registering the lowest net (68) in the double-peoria event. The 12-handicapper fired a 41 on the front and 39 on the back for a gross 80. Joining him on the Top 3 and winning $300 and $200 were Young Cheon Kim and junior golfer and Camacho's teammate on the CNMI National Team, Edward Lee. Kim had a 25.20 handicap and posted a gross 94 (45 and 49) for a net 68.80. Lee, on the other hand, logged a net 69.20 after tallying a 4.48 handicap and shooting a 41 and 33 on the front and back nines, respectively, for a gross 74.

Besides the Top 3 low net winners and best gross, the organizing Korean Community of Saipan also handed prizes to the No. 13, 23, 33, 43, 53, 63, and 73 finishers. The winners were Eun Ae Jang, Thompson Palik, Chris Leon Guerrero, Jin Kyu Hong, Hean Song Jung, Jong Wan Won, and Jae Yoon Cha.

In the closest to the pin contest, other winners were Jay Kim (No. 6) and Byung Hyun Park (No. 11), while Pat Kaipat had the longest drive at No. 18 with 315 yards.

Meanwhile, Korean Community of Saipan president Neung Sik Chang thanked all the golfers and the sponsors who supported the tournament. He added that part of the proceeds from the fundraiser will be used to bring local students to Korea for cultural exchange programs, while others will support their community projects on Saipan.

PEGS

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as he knocked in a triple and made a fastbreak layup to put PEGS on top, 57-55. Brennan and Melvin Villarin also contributed in the decisive run, as the former finished a contested layup and hit the bonus free throw, while the latter flipped in a fastbreak layup plus a buzzer-beating 3-pointer to seal the deal.

It was a sorry loss for MJD, which was ahead at the break, 32-27.

Then at resumption of the match, PEGS rode on Brennan's shoulders to steal the win. Brennan finished with a game-high 25 points, and his efforts were rewarded with a Finals MVP plaque.

"Finals MVP! I wasn't even thinking about awards during the game, to be honest, but I'm very humbled to receive this award," Brennan said. "I wouldn't have gotten [the Finals MVP] without my teammates."

Ashburn backed up Brennan after adding 16 markers, while Villarin and Gino Libuw recorded 8 and 6 points, respectively. Jack Aranda had 15 for MJD, while Jorge De Guzman chipped in 14.

"I just wanna thank my team for trusting me to run the ball [as point guard]. Thanks to coach Edong for inviting me to be on his team and for giving me this opportunity," Brennan said. Thanks to the [Emon Lodge No. 179] organization for putting this together and continuing the league after the typhoon," Brennan added. "And most importantly, thanks to my loving family for always supporting me with everything."

Meanwhile, Islander took the third place trophy after a narrow victory against top-ranked PIC, 85-82.

James Abuy had an opportunity to tie the game, as he was left wide open for a trey, but his shot hit the back iron as time expired.

Jet Jandoc led Islander with his 33 points, while Ed Pangelinan and Rocyl Ritual contributed 17 and 16 points, respectively. Abuy top-scored for PIC with his 41 points, while Raymond Tolentino, Jerome Norita, and Butch Sublemente added 15, 13, and 10 markers, respectively.

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN

Pacific Engineering Groups & Services players pose with their championship trophy after beating MJD Corp., 65-55, in the finals of the Emon Lodge caging yesterday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

Finals

PEGS 65—Brennan 25, Ashburn 16, Villarin 8, Libuw 6, Dayrit 4, Rasa 4, Echavez 2

MJD 55—Aranda 15, De Guzman 14, Bisana 6, Lisua 6, Tabora 6, Ocampo 4.

Scoring by quarters: 15-17, 27-32, 44-44, 65-55.

Third Place

Islander 85—Jandoc 33, Pangelinan 17, Ritual 16, Mangali 12, Manabat 2, Paraiso 2, Tabora 2.

PIC 82—Abuy 41, Tolentino 15, Norita 13, Sublemente 10, Fernandez 6.

Scoring by quarters: 18-17, 37-50, 58-61, 85-82.

GIRLS

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seed Dana Lee also got the outright semis ticket and will face Hong in the other battle for a finals berth this weekend.

Hong needed only two sets to march into the semifinals after she topped Savita Sikkel yesterday, 6-4, 6-4.

Sikkel will also play in the girls U12 doubles and this time will partner with Wang. They will go head-to-head against Chung and Lee for the division championship this weekend.

In other results, Malika Miyawaki drew first blood in the round-robin girls U18 singles after outclassing Maria Gregoire, 6-0, 6-1. Tania Tan is the third player entered in the field and did not play in the opening week, as she competed in the 10K event of the Guam Marathon yesterday morning.

In the girls U18 doubles, Gregoire ended up on the winning side, as she and Hyejin Elliot swept Serin Ching and Miyawaki, 6-3, 6-2. Helen Kim and Tania Tan will also be playing in the round-robin contest.

Kim, Serin Chung, and Elliot will also see action in the girls U14 singles event of the tournament, which is the last local competition under the Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association's 2018-2019 calendar and is part of NMITA's selection process for the CNMI National Team that will play in the 2019 North Pacific Regional Championships in June on Saipan.

In the girls U10 singles, Lina Tsukagoshi and Eubeen Hwang both defeated Ellie Cho to set up their title game in the division this weekend. Hwang was the first one to down Cho after cruising to a 6-1 victory last Saturday. Then yesterday, Tsukagoshi had a similar easy victory over Cho, 6-2.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Savita Sikkel returns to Seiyul Hong during the first set of their girls U12 singles match in the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships yesterday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Tiger and company set stage for epic Masters finale

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Sports

Russell leads Nets to Game 1 stunner over 76ers

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PEGS stuns MJD in finale

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

Pacific Engineering Groups & Services pulled off an upset in the season finale after beating MJD Corp., 65-55, in the 2018 Emon Lodge No. 179 Brotherhood/IT&E Basketball League yesterday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

The No. 4 seed PEGS overcame the odds to defeat No. 2 MJD in the winner-take-all match. PEGS' road to the Promised Land was not easy, as it had to go through No. 1 Pacific Islands Club first. PEGS went on to stun PIC in the semis game last Saturday, 65-59, and completed the uphill climb in the playoffs and claimed the championship trophy with an upset over MJD, which marched into the finals after eliminating Islander Rent A Car, 90-74.

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
PEGS' Don Brennan, left, battles MJD Corp.'s Randy Mungcal for the rebound during their title game in the Emon Lodge caging yesterday at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

MJD and PEGS were evenly match in the title showdown, as they exchanged leads from the opening tip to the closing minutes of the game before the latter's grit and resilience on the defensive end fueled them to success.

"Whether we were leading or behind, it all came down to our defense and grabbing those boards," Don Brennan said. "As long as we were doing our job on defense, I knew we would be able to find our rhythm on offense and make the shots."

PEGS did really get the job done on defense in the last two minutes and change of the finale, as the eventual champion shut down MJD.

Then on offense, Andrew Ashburn had a 5-point string,

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Girls U12 singles semis cast complete

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The girls U12 singles competition in the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships is down to four players after Seiyul Hong and Hoo Wang secured semis berths over the weekend.

Wang notched the third Final Four ticket in the division after downing Anna Kwon in an extended game last Saturday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts. Wang prevailed in the first set, 6-3, but could not close out the match early when Kwon fought back and eked out a 7-6 (6) triumph in the second. Then in the deciding super-tie-breaker third set, Wang regained her bearings and outlasted Kwon, 10-7, to move into the semis where she will challenge No. 1 seed Irin Chung this weekend.

Chung drew a bye in the opening week of the DFS Saipan-sponsored competition and automatically made it to the Final Four. No. 2

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Seiyul Hong makes a backhand return to Savita Sikkel during their girls U12 singles game in the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships yesterday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Camacho, Tenorio share top honors

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Pacific Games-bound Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho shot a 3-under par 69 to win the low gross category, while Ed Tenorio topped the low net division in the 2019 Korean Community of Saipan Golf Classic held on the east course of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort last Saturday.

Camacho, who will be representing the CNMI in the 2019 Pacific Games in Apia, Samoa this summer, carded a 1-under par on the front nines and had two birdies in the first nine holes to get himself in a good position to rule the strong 144-player field. He then capped the competition with three birdies on the back nine for an even better 2-under par and a two-stroke victory over J.J. Atalig.

Despite besting the more than 100 players in the weekend tournament, Camacho said he still needs more work

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
From left, Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho, Edward Lee, Ed Tenorio, and Korean Community of Saipan president Neung Sik Chang pose for a photo during the awards ceremony for the 2019 Korean Community of Saipan Golf Classic held at the Saipan World Resort last Saturday.